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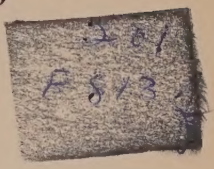

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"The Finality of the Christian Religion"

19295

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TO MY MOTHER WHO PASSED AWAY BEFORE I COULD KNOW HER, MY DEAR FATHER WHO IS WITH US STILL, AND MY OLD FRIENDS AMONG THE WEST VIRGINIA HILLS WHICH STAND LIKE SENTINELS AROUND MY CHILDHOOD'S HOME, THIS LITTLE VOLUME IS LOVINGLY INSCRIBED BY THE AUTHOR

Montani semper liberi

PREFACE

During the academic year of 1907–8, the Philosophic Union of the State University of California at Berkeley used my book, *The Finality of the Christian Religion*, as the basis of its study and discussion. It honored me further by a request to give the annual address before its Union, which I did on August 29, 1908. The address was delivered extemporaneously, but was subsequently dictated in a somewhat enlarged form to a stenographer, for publication in the university Journal. Owing to some agitation of rather a misleading character, in the press, but especially to the kind reception accorded me in Berkeley, for which I am very grateful, I decided to publish the address in book form. Again, I have gone to the pains of amplifying and popularizing it still more, and I have taken the liberty of keeping the form of public address throughout the new matter as well

as the old. This accounts for the recurrence of the personal pronoun, for which, now that the book is written, I am inclined to be sorry. Those who do not care for so popular a book on such a subject may find the conceptual substance of it in the original address, as published in the *University of California Chronicle*, Vol. XI, No. 1. The book has been dashed off at white heat in about thirty days as a sort of "by-product" of a more difficult task. It cannot rank as a work of pure science, for it is not closely enough keyed together for that; nor is it intended to rank as a work of literature. But I am sustained by the firm conviction of having uttered, not without vigor, some of the things to which my day and generation need most of all to give heed.

Into whose hands could I wish this little volume to fall? Not into those of students in this field, like myself, for they would probably learn nothing from it unless it were to avoid the errors which I have made and to escape the perils which I have en-

countered. At the other extreme, not into the hands of those who are happy and holy as they repose in views of origin and statements of belief that are fixed for them in their church traditions. I would not hurt the feelings of such nor incite them to a change for which they feel no need. I could wish with all my heart that our fathers and mothers might enjoy the blessed calm of the evening of life, free from the spiritual bewilderment of those who have had to wander in the region of doubt and to feel their feet slip just when they thought that some rock on which they stood was firm. Nor am I sure that it would be worth while for those whose unbelief is fixed and final to peruse these pages. My experience is that many persons of this class have no hospitality for an appreciative interpretation and vindication of human nature's religious treasures, which to most of those who possess them are the deepest and dearest that life holds.

But our country is full of young men and

women still in the formative period of life. They are seekers after truth. They have graduated from our public schools, perhaps from our colleges. They have been taught one thing in the classroom and quite a different thing in the church and Sunday school. They have outgrown the traditional church faith, and for other reasons still they have left off going to church entirely. Many of them are debating whether they shall hear or whether they shall forbear. Some of them are even in a mood to say with Morrison I. Swift, "Man will not give religion two thousand or twenty centuries more to try itself and waste human time. Its time is up: its probation is ended; its own record ends it." These persons want the worst that they know provided for. Let them detect an evasion, an insincerity, or some sophistication of the truth; let them hear you say that you know what you do not know and cannot know, and they will curl their lips in scorn and cross over to the other side of the street

when they see you coming. If I could, I should like to go out to meet these persons, with their demand that the situation be faced with pitiless veracity. My sympathies are with them. Still we do not live in a day —so at all events it seems to me—when it is possible to proffer them the full and solid comfort and hope which warmed the hearts and illumined the faces of the fathers, theirs and mine. But it also seems to me that something can be done and that here even a little is much. And since they, like myself, would rather have a minimum that was sure than a maximum that was not, I have tried to do no more than to cleave to the sunnier side of doubt. And may there be light and warmth enough to keep us from freezing in the dark.

GEORGE B. FOSTER

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
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When one reads a manual of history, one sees that anxieties of conscience, theological discussions, politico-theological rivalries, have always disturbed the heart of man. At times the struggle is particularly poignant and radical: then an ancient form of religion disappears before a new faith, destined to supplant it perhaps completely. The Christian world is at present, in my opinion, in one of these particularly critical periods. Among individuals the best informed, among the peoples the most civilized, who by their birth or history are those adhering to the teaching of Jesus, the religious idea, the religious sentiment, have entered into a crisis extremely grave.

—Abbé A. Houtin

I

The feare of things invisible is the naturall Seed of Religion.—THOMAS HOBBES.

In brooding over the history of thought one finds, I think, that the psychology of any era has assimilated itself to the method and to the controlling concept of the natural science of that era, and that in turn the thought of God of the same period has been molded after the doctrine of the soul as accepted by the psychologist. In the history of the doctrine of the soul and of God there have been certainly three outstanding epochs of this kind, and if—as we Americans say—I am to arrive at my objective point tonight, it will serve my purpose to have you reflect at the outset upon this whole matter.

1. In late antiquity what was the form of knowledge, the basic category? An illustration or two will make the matter plain and save my time. For example, it was

thought that the sun emitted its beams in overflowing and everlasting fulness throughout the whole world, and yet remained inexhaustibly and eternally the same in its substance and power. Again, the force of a plant—the impelling force—passed on into stem and branch, flower and fruit, and yet at the same time remained without weakness and without diminution in the root of the plant. What was true with reference to these was true in general, and so you have the antique basic conception of physical reality. It is that of substance and manifestation. Now, in psychology and in theology, both of which were paying toll to the physical thought of the time, the student molded his view of the soul and of God after this model. The soul was considered to be a fixed and inexhaustible substance on the one hand, which manifested itself in various phenomenal ways on the other, but without doing prejudice to the integrity and the sameness of the substance. So, similarly, for the thought of God, result-

ing in the Philonic twofoldness, the neo-Platonic fourfoldness, or the Christian Trinity. In the case of the twofoldness thought stopped with the dual category of substance and manifestation unmediated. Fourfoldness was arrived at by the reciprocal procession of substance and manifestation toward each other; threefoldness, by procession from the side of the substance alone. In each instance the procession was substantialized, and was not to be estimated as a mere activity. The point is that substance was the word that expressed at once the final category of reality and judgment of value. Nature was substance. The soul was substance. God was substance. And salvation was the sacramental mediation of the God-substance to the soul-substance. Religion was supernatural materialism.

It is not my mission this evening to delineate the great change from this point of view which took place later, nor to expose the reasons which led to such a change; but

we know that the idea of irradiating realities which remain at the same time unprejudiced in their substance and fulness came to have no significance for later thought. The light-and-heat energy that the sun sends out is lost to the sun, and the sun would perish did not compensatory substances come to it from other sources. But when physics abandoned this category, in due time psychology and theology did the same, and for the same reason. Yet this way of looking at things persisted from antiquity to the modern period, and hence almost no progress was made, say, in psychology from Aristotle to Thomas Hobbes. I say almost no progress, for of course the mediaeval work of the distinction and definition and classification of psychic phenomena prepared certain rubrics and sorted out the material a little for the investigation of the modern period. And what was true for psychology was true for theology—with a certain mental reservation which I need not now consider.

2. But a great change came in the sixteenth century when the modern science of material phenomena arose. That self-identical substance of the former period was broken up into a multiplicity of atoms. The idea of the thoroughgoing, inviolable legality of all material happening dawned upon the physicists. The mathematico-mechanical way of manipulating phenomena came into vogue. The cause-and-effect category was credited with universal validity in the region of the physical. Such —roughly indicated—was the point of view in the study of nature. Now, here again natural science became an invaluable example for psychology; and a little later both the orthodox and the rationalistic theology, each in its own way, assimilated itself to the method and categories of the new psychologists. Once again, psychology assimilated itself to the science of nature, and the soul was a system of ideas as nature was a system of atoms. Like the physicists, the psychologists talked of ideas

as atoms; and whether you listen to the physicists or to the psychologists you hear discourse upon inertia, attraction, repulsion, aggregation, mass, upon integration, disintegration, and redintegration; only in the one case it is atoms and in the other it is ideas. Also the psychic without remainder was subject to the cause-and-effect category. Freedom in the sense of causelessness was held to be an empty notion by psychology. Freedom was only the absence of compulsion, if we had any right to speak of it at all, the being determined by our own nature, by forces resident within us. If it was urged that such an idea of the psychic might be misused by immature minds, it was replied that a truth is none the less true for its being misunderstood, and that science is concerned not with what is fit to be preached, but with what is true.

In the same period, religion was likewise a system of ideas either contained in the Scriptures or else inborn in the human spirit itself. These ideas were like the

atoms, unchangeable, imperishable, constitutive of reality—cause, of which the phenomenon of religious experience was effect—making human experience, and not made by it. Such ideas were validated by the appeal to the mode of their origin, either biblical or innate. In both cases it was clear that they were antecedent to and independent of human experience, and therefore not of human origin; but if not of human origin, they were assumed on that account to be of divine origin. For orthodoxy, the biblical ideas were clad with the divine authority of an unchangeable God; for rationalism, innate ideas were of like authority for like reason. The tree was known by its roots. I repeat, these ideas, biblical or innate, were the uncriticized ground of the material of experience. The life of experience was thought to be made by fixed realities of knowledge and modeled after that knowledge. The fixed idea made the life, not life the idea. The supernaturalness of the ideas, it was supposed,

would guarantee the supernaturalness of the life for those who held the ideas to be true, and gave in their intellectual adherence and obedience to them. Thus, if in the former period religion was conceived to be the sacramental and materialistic mediation of the divine substance to the human, it was in this period a system of divine truth from the mind of God, authoritatively communicated to the mind of man. The intimate and inner experiences of the human mind then ensued. But the point is that in this epoch nature is a system of interrelated atoms of matter, the soul a system of interrelated ideas, and religion a system of truth: Nature, soul, God, each broken up into a multiplicity and system of properties.

3. But the transference of natural science views to psychic investigation, in spite of powerful stimulus issuing therefrom, had its night side for the study of the soul as for the thought of religion. As I indicated, the first brilliant achievements of modern

natural science were predominantly those of physics, especially those of mechanics. It is no wonder that the scholar hoped for a similar achievement in psychology, did he orient with the mechanico-physical processes. If such progress was made by the physicist in the use of his categories of inertia, attraction, repulsion, aggregation, and chemical combination, why should not the psychologist operate with these same tools? Why should not the theologian follow suit, systematize the ideas of his Bible or the innate ideas of his own soul? But then, is the soul a mechanism like a watch or a galvanic battery? Is man a system of ideas? Can association psychology and association theology do justice to the mystery and majesty, the sacredness and the significance of human nature? Again, I have not time to indicate how such a question as this arose and had to arise. In the book which you have paid me the honor of making the basis of your philosophical discussions for the year, I have elaborated

my version of this great change, in the chapter entitled, "The Changed View of the World and of Life." A strong opposition set in against this whole intellectualism represented by associationists with their well-nigh exclusive regard for the thinking and knowing activity of the soul. Men grew tired of talking of the co-existence and the opposition, of the coming and the going, of the uniting and disuniting, of the mechanical play of series of ideas, or of masses of ideas, whether psychic or theological; for if this is all that there is to us it does not make much difference whether there is even this or not. Human nature from such a point of view is a dreary thing, bereft of values save the connection-value which for a certain kind of science has some interest. From the point of view of this intellectualism, what of such a phenomenon as religion? A petty complex of ideas to be logically proved, augmented by a larger complex of superstitions—inventions excogitated by priests and princes, as it was

thought, and cultivated by them in the interests of a more facile control of mankind. And what of art? Is the lyric of Goethe, is the symphonic music of Beethoven, a contrivance for the mediation of knowledge through the senses, as the word aesthetic signifies, or for the insidious production of ideas which would make men more virtuous or more patriotic? And what is human personality, that center of psychic existence, of all unitary individuality? Men began to wonder and question, and the pre-Kantian primacy of the theoretical reason fell into disrepute. Men like Rousseau and Kant and Fichte and Schopenhauer lifted their voices in emphasis of the willing and feeling life as more central and more significant than the ideational life. They urged the supremacy of the former as the expression of the innermost and idiomatic nature of man over the mechanics of ideas of the association psychology and association theology. As Professor Paulsen somewhere says, if man were

merely intellect, he might be content with the aggregation of knowledge scraped together little by little here and there by science, but since he is, and is fundamentally, a willing and a feeling being, he must have art and poetry and faith and religion, and he must have these in a depth and fulness proportionate to the fulness and depth of human nature, which cannot be reduced to a system of ideas. Thus, what has come to be technically known as voluntarism has pushed the old intellectualism into that degree of subordination which it merits.

But it was not until far into the nineteenth century that this third era had its flowering time. The biological sciences arose, and instead of the old categories men began to talk of reflexes, inhibitions, habit, assimilation, adaptation, especially of that great achievement of modern biology, the thought of development; and once again psychology followed suit and picked up the forms and instruments of knowledge of other sciences, and in their use entered upon

a new and glorious career. Psychology assimilated itself to biological science, and now, in due time, theology is beginning to think of religion and of God after the analogy of the thought of consciousness and of the soul as cherished by the psychologist. In every age the basic and unitary concept has in time become the tool of all the thinkers. In this last period —the biological—the great words are organism, organ, function, development, and such categories as belong consistently with these. I pay tribute to the prevalence and power of this new approach to reality in the wording of my subject this evening, namely, "The Function of Religion in the Human Struggle for Existence."

II

It is the question, then, of the worth of religion to the human organism, individual and social, and I trust the way is now clear for me to work into this problem a little more thoroughly and patiently.

1. But, first of all, what do we mean by an organism? It is a self-preservation machine. The word machine is not quite happy. Let us call it a contrivance or device, or better, a system directed to its own development and preservation.

An organism has two ways of preserving itself. One is by conflict. There is the conflict of the organism with the outside world, with beings like itself and unlike itself, and there is the conflict of organ with organ, cell with cell, within itself, a conflict for food, for room, for supremacy. It is a constant, complete, strenuous, ceaseless fight. There is no way to exaggerate this warfare of all with all. Here,

too, war is the father of all things. The purpose of this warfare is the escaping or neutralizing and overcoming of what is injurious to the organism on the one hand, or the appropriating and utilizing of what is beneficial to the organism on the other. It is then one part of the task of the organism's self-preservation. But in the second place, in fulfilling this task, the organism develops a specific peculiarity which is of great importance. The mammal seeks or escapes its environment differently from the bird; the horse from the lion; the cat fights with one tool, the sparrow with another, the snake with another; but in every case something like a military instrument is developed which is the sword of the spirit of the whole organism, which the whole organism at times manipulates offensively or defensively. So the organism preserves itself. But the interesting point is that the organs which it generates in this business of self-preservation are at the same time precisely those contributions

by which the organism as such is consummated. In this warfare the organism effectuates itself. In this self-effectuation it is equipped for battle. It grows in fighting and it fights to grow. Which is primary in the immanent meaning and movement of organic life, the self-completion or the self-preservation? Nietzsche, in his book entitled, *Jenseits Gut und Böse*, berates the physiologist for making self-preservation the primary interest of an organism. It is not that, but *self-discharge*, he says. His criticism is suggestive to me. He—but then not he alone—has hit upon a consideration of the utmost importance. An organism does not come to be what it is through exclusive naturalistic and fatalistic determination from without. It is not a passive product of alien agencies. The activity through which it is elaborated is within as well as without. It would seem as if the plan and form were underivable, original, immanent. In everything there is something of the spider which translates

its own self into its own web, as well as of the bee which goes abroad for the material upon which it practices its mysterious alchemy. Still, the illustration does not quite hit the point I am trying to make. It is something more than urging that an organism is what it is, not as a helpless plaything of its environment, not even as assimilator of the stuff of its environment; it is that the organism is self-creative, self-expressive; it is that it is what it is and does what it does not merely to checkmate its environment but also—to use Nietzsche's word again—to *discharge* its own self. It is more concerned in being its own self, living its own life, according to what seems to be an immanent and underivable plan and process of its own, than it is in adjustment to environment. I mean that the latter is for the sake of the former. The skipping and playing of lambs on a green hillside is an independent discharge of life, and not simply an environmental necessity. You do not cry primarily to enlist the

sympathy and secure the help of your friends, but rather to express yourself. I suppose the same thing is true with reference to the origin of our human languages. You do not talk primarily with a view to having others possess ideas that you possess, but with a view to uttering yourself. So men make speeches and write books. And yet the distinction, important as it is—especially for my purpose tonight—is not so great as Nietzsche thinks, for self-discharge is itself self-preservation, is itself organ-and-function forming behavior. Self-expression is the way to organic and functional self-completion, and in the end the whole matter amounts to what I said a moment ago, that self-preservation is at the same time self-effectuation, and that self-effectuation is due to the organic equipment for self-preservation. Nevertheless, my words have not been wasted if I have made it clear that there is an organic *predisposition*, determinant of organic formation and career, for which the popular

naturalistic reference to environment is no adequate explanation. If the question be further pressed as to the source of this predisposition, the answer I would make is, first, that it is not an answerable question, and, secondly, herein reminding us of the old doctrine of the *aseity* of God himself, that the predisposition is *causa sui:* that is, activity is an immanent and constant fact of reality even more than is passivity or derivability.

2. Now what is true with reference to organisms in general holds good of the soul. In this regard, the soul is a being of the same kind as the body, that is, it is a system striving for its own preservation, only not through externally visible and tangible but solely through inwardly experienced formations and functions. This was the view even of Spinoza, and more recently of Fechner. That the preservation was maintained by conflict with what was given in external phenomena as "outside world" is an insight whose general recognition is

traceable to the influence of Charles Darwin; and the part played in psychic well-being by the living-out and the working-out of psychic energies and endowments is at bottom an opinion as old as Aristotle. If today we could inwardly unify these relevant factors from Spinoza and Fechner, from Aristotle and Darwin, we should gain a general view of the soul that would bring our thought into harmony once more with the basic concepts of our scientific knowledge. At all events, the point which we have now reached is that the soul is not a static entity with attributes and properties, as it was according to the beliefs of the first era of which I have spoken, nor is it a system of ideas like the atoms of the physical science of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The association-psychology was of a piece with that whole mechanical way of looking at reality. Today the psychologist thinks of the soul as a psycho-physiological organism. I have the impression that when the collective conscious-

ness becomes thoroughly habituated to modern science our words "soul and body" as well as "matter and spirit" will drop out of our language: much as I shall continue to use them in this address, quite as we speak of the rising and setting of the sun. There is no such thing as a self-dependent soul freely active or interactive within an organism which we call the body, just as similarly there is no self-dependent deity freely active or interactive within that larger body which we call the cosmos. All this is a survival of primitive animism, which populated the whole world with spirits, demons, hobgoblins: in short, with soul-like beings which were related to things much as we think the soul is connected with the body or God with the universe. I mean that soul and body are not two beings confronting each other as independent and interoperative, but that they are one being giving account of itself in a twofold manner. As it exhibits itself as unspatial, ceaselessly changing, and yet in many ways identical

synthesis of sense-impressions, thoughts, feelings, wishes, ideals, endeavors, we call it soul; but as it is something extended, pliable, convoluted, cellular, fibrous, we call it brain and nervous system, as if there were two separate entities externally encountering each other in interaction. They are only one reality, but at one time such as knows of itself immediately and is for itself, at another time such as exhibits itself to other similar realities. I am trying to indicate that the immanence of a free or unfree soul-entity in a body is quite as unintelligible to psychology as the immanence of a free or unfree God-entity in the cosmos is unintelligible to philosophical reflection. To repeat, it is a psycho-physiological organism with whose self-preservation and self-completion we have to do.

Now, in order to preserve itself in conflict with the "outside world," this organism requires orientation concerning this world. In the impressions evoked by outside influences it gains the material for the

effectuation of its peculiarity. This psychic organism inwardly produces manifold activities of a connecting, concentrating, constructive character, and the results thereof appear ultimately again in visible motions of the external organs. Briefly summarized, there are impressions springing from the processes of the "outside world," the inner psychic elaborations of these impressions, the reactions consequent and appropriate thereto. I am indicating that for purposes of its self-preservation and its self-consummation the soul generates organs and functions. For example, do you need to be informed concerning the "outside world," so that you can move around in it without breaking your neck? You receive this needed orientation concerning the "outside world" through sensation mediated by sense-organs, through colors and sounds and smells and a number of other sensations. Again, is your instruction concerning the "outside world" through sensation inadequate for the needs of the organism?

Do you need to know something of the past and the future and what exists hidden behind the hill? Then the soul generates *ideas* which will extend your mastery beyond the here and the now. In this way you can see things with your eyes closed and hear things with your ears stopped. You are not fastened down absolutely to the material present of things with which you have to do. You can bear about with you the possibility of a certain realization of the peculiarities and processes of things that are absent or remote. Still again, what attitude shall you assume toward objects with which you become acquainted by sensation and idea? Are the things in the world contributing to the weal or to the woe of the psycho-physiological organism? For purposes of its welfare, the soul has generated the feelings of pleasure and pain, evaluating the impressions which orient it concerning the "outside world." The soul must know how to employ objective things for its battle of self-preservation. Thus it

equips itself with pleasure-pain feelings, by which it determines whether or not its situation is beneficial or injurious to its life, or whether it needs to take some new tack as it battles with the winds and waves of existence.

The essence of us is forward-striving toward a flying goal. We call this "will," but it is doubtful—I am not meaning to pronounce an opinion upon the point—whether the will is something apart from and independent of our impulse, our sensation, our idea, and our pleasure-pain feeling. After all, what is the will but the impulse grown anticipatory? It is this impulsive willing life that is the root of us and that generates such organs as those whose functions I have been defining. These are not all, to be sure; for if you run up the scale of the human you must think of what we call the higher achievements of the organism. There is attention, by which we mean ability to select those impressions that instruct us concerning the

"outside world" which are of importance from the point of view of our interest or of our weal and woe. It is a function of selection and limitation, by which the soul escapes being smothered beneath the material which would otherwise be dumped upon it through the senses; by which, also, a few requirements, specially related to its ends, are heeded. And there, too, is memory, supplementing attention, completing and enriching present experience by ideas of what was joined with it in a former experience though the cause of that experience be now absent. In the phenomena of habit, again, there is a marvelous adaptation of the soul to its surroundings in the interest of self-preservation. Because of the relegation of many reactions to facile, swift, even automatic movements, almost the full energy of the soul can be dedicated to situations that are variant, novel, unexpected. Or we might cite fatigue as an interesting example. Fatigue is manifestly a protective and precautionary measure of

the soul. It is the soul's protest against "too long hours," so to speak: its bid for rest, just as the heart itself rests an instant between beats. As an instance of a different kind, we may think of abstraction. Far more than attention, habit, or memory, does the power of abstraction release the soul from detailed and distributive toil to manage the things with which it has to do. It forms ideas for which there is no concrete counterpart, like the general idea of color, tree, or house. Moreover, the discovery of order and law is a work of abstraction. So of genus and species. The soul forms an ordered system of things. It thus mounts above a retail business and forms a trust or a department store, becomes a "prince" or "magnate" or "king," instead of a petty slave doing the chores of life. One can chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.

But still, again, much attention is devoted today to the function of language in experience. Apart from its immense importance

as an instrument of mutual understanding in our social life, it is indispensable to the life and development of the individual soul as such. It facilitates abstract thinking, thereby enhancing the control of thought over things. For one thing, this increase of controlling power is due to the discovery of the law that regulates things. How bodies fall, if one hurls them or drops them, it is antecedently difficult to say: one swiftly, another slowly, still another not at all, since it flies aloft. But if one forms the idea of a vacuum, and arrives at the concept of velocity, then the whole matter becomes simple, valid alike for bodies on the earth or in the heavens. They fall with constant velocity. We are now in possession of a law; and laws depend preponderatingly upon higher abstraction. But without language such higher abstraction is impossible, and knowledge of the laws of things is likewise impossible.

But for another thing this higher abstractness is equivalent to a greater scope

of ideas, to a greater wealth of things, and that is to say further that it is tantamount to a greater wealth of vicarious thought. In any general proposition, e.g., Washington is the father of his country, think what a wealth of ideas, thoughts, relations, sentiments, is touched upon. But it is extremely little of all this that one is directly conscious of—only so much, indeed, as is requisite in order to the understanding of the sentence. But the whole remaining wealth is at the disposal of the soul, at the service of the soul's ends, in case special circumstances should enlist interest in them. In a word, the great effect of language is a vastly more thorough and more comprehensive control of things by our thought than would otherwise be possible: this aside from the importance of language for the collective life of man. There is another service which language renders, and it will serve my purpose to designate that. The same outside things, and so the ideas associated with the same words, differ from

individual to individual, differ indeed for the same individual at different times; in fact are characterized by a peculiar unsteadiness and fleetingness at one and the same time even. All this is not without its value, so far as thought adapts itself in this way to the special circumstances of the individual and of single cases, and is yet just to the wealth of things up to a certain degree by means of brisk change. But the procedure is not without considerable disadvantage. Regard for contingent and perhaps subordinate peculiarities of things may take the place of great and important traits of their existence and relations. Communication and correct understanding of the thought are rendered difficult. Now language makes possible, if not the removal, at least an essential limitation of this defect. Language exhibits the important points by a number of illuminating and descriptive words, that is, by definition, and thereby removes hindrances to logical thought. Think of the difference between

the popular and the scientific ideas of, say, freedom, energy, and the like. Language, lending itself to the need of definition, is a great boon here. But I must not say more upon a subject which itself requires a volume, and about which your psychologies have instructed you, as well as me. However, owing to an important similarity between language and religion, it has seemed to me advisable to specify some kinds of service which language renders the soul in its self-preservation and self-consummation, a service for which, under the stress of outer circumstance and at an instigation from within, the soul generated language.

More important still, perhaps, is the function of morality in our human struggle of existence. Here especially our thought must be extended from the psycho-physiological organism to the social structure. "All men are created free and equal," was the stirring declaration of our illustrious fathers. But on reflection there is much here that gives us pause. Even their idea

of man—I must return to this later—was, in its abstract universality, quite consonant with their rationalism, not such as to include the kinds of the empirically human to which their adjective should have pointed. And instead of men being created free, we know that freedom is not an endowment but an achievement. Besides, a *created* man, a created spirit, is a contradiction in terms. As to the equality of "all men," there is none. By virtue of difference in their geographical and climatic homes, men are, and are to be, different. Civilization makes almost no headway where nature is so luxurious and benign that men do not need to work, or so parsimonious and harsh that men cannot work. The burden of progress must be borne by men in the temperate zone. These men will be ever different from others in science and art and morality and religion. Again, men are everywhere different on account of difference in natural endowment and capacity. Some are physically stronger, or intellec-

tually keener and broader in vision, or possess more energy of will, than others. Thus the former set "gets on" better and faster than the latter. The former bound forward with enthusiasm, the latter lag behind. A ruler class and a servant class quickly develop. It is plain to be seen what the result would be did each class act from purely egoistic motives in the interest of individual or class preservation alone. Class war would arise from the heart of every folk. Egoistic conduct would foment strife, mistrust. This would weaken, perhaps disrupt, the solidarity of the community. As a consequence, the social organism would lack in power of resistance against an alien foe, the ruling class would be deprived, through fear, of the full enjoyment of its own goods and privileges, and organic misery would be the lot of all. To avert such calamities, altruistic conduct, having regard for the whole, would instinctively originate. Measures would be devised that looked to the preservation and welfare of

the collective or organic life of a folk. On the one hand, community-destroying acts would be punished. Society would be preserved by the compulsory conduct of its members. On the other hand, opposite pole to this use of outer force, there would grow up the inner compulsion of freedom. To law must be added morality: the preservation of human society by means of the free acts of its members, the love of truth, the spirit of sacrifice, honor for parents, care for children, and the like. At length the identity of all human interest dawns upon the reflective mind—no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself. And by so much as the inner compulsion of freedom grows, the outer compulsion of force may drop away. The spirit of an organism—all for each and each for all—maintains its unity and safety and perfection from within, and the iron bands and precautionary régimes supplied from without may be snapped asunder. In the end we arrive at the inspiring ideal of

humanity, viz., the spiritual freedom of the individual within the common brotherhood of all men. I do not forget that this external régime, both as to its origin and as to its sanction, is referred to the gods; but the régime, no less than this reference, is created by the human for the human. To this also I must return in the proper connection.

But I must not multiply instances. Wherever you look, you see the same thing: the evolutionary sprouting of organs and functions from the human for the sake of the human. Whether you think of the physical or of the psychical or of the social, the same general mode of preservation and completion obtains. There is nothing individual or collective that has not come to be, on the one hand, in the stress and storm of the struggle for existence, and, on the other hand, according to a predisposition and principle of inexplicable activity immanent and constant in all reality.

3. I should like to make this general point of view as significant and impressive

as possible. Perhaps I could do so by contrasting our present conception of man with some of those of the past, by turning from psychology to history.

a) You know that in the catholic Middle Age, man in idea was thought of as an angel, without fatherland, family, or vocation, aye, without body.

b) At length humanism arose—a return to ancient Greek culture that had been despised by the church. The natural man began to assert himself against your ecclesiastical, supernatural man; the cult of life against the cult of death. The natural man had always been there beneath the clothes that tried to obscure and conceal him, with real body and passions that could not be entirely belied by the saint. The saint could not choke the hunger for life. Deeper than all fasts and prayers, deeper than all contempt of the world and negation of life, the hot lust of life was only violently repressed; it only awaited all the more longingly the moment when

satisfaction and sufficiency would be accorded to it. Hence it was but as a spark dropped into the powder barrel when the long-banished genius of the Greeks reentered the ecclesiastical world. The smoldering fire of life in Italian men and women flared forth in consuming flame. Nietzsche's *Herrnmensch* sang his victorious song: on the earth will he live, the earth will he enjoy, over the earth will he have dominion. The artist learned to see, the poet to hear, the philosopher to inquire and think—all about men, not saints and angels, about earth, not heaven. No longer the revelation as mediated to man by the church, but the truth of which nature and human life itself was the unwithering fountain, was now the center of interest. It was the renaissance which planted the seeds whose best fruits begin to ripen in our own day.

c) But that old humanistic man had his serious limitations, cramped in all kinds of shells which he brought with him from old Hellas. That past knew free men, but

only in opposition to the slave; it knew *Herrnmenschen*, but only in single, outstanding examples: they were masters by virtue of their enslaving others. To humanism still a great gulf was fixed between man, the master, and scarcely-man, the slave. The old wall of partition between the saved and the lost was intact still, only it was not now faith, as in the Middle Age, but culture, art, science. Not to participate in this culture was to be an outcast from the pale of humanity. And this culture was quite an exclusive affair—back to Hellas and Rome must you go, so remote to your life! There was simply a change of alien authorities—Homer, instead of the Bible; Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, as guides, instead of the church Fathers. But guides there must be still, else man would not know the way. But the great mass of men did not know these old Greeks and Romans, from whom all the beauty and all the truth of the world had come. Therefore the mass of men, who have no fountain of

life in themselves, must be—it is the papacy over again—everlasting minors in the charge of the few who could drink at the well-spring of humanistic life, appropriate humanistic culture. To this day we have descendants of these old humanists in our educators who think that a man has no culture if he does not know Greek and Latin, who are always crying "back" to something, fettering the development of popular life to classicism. With the notion of "original sin" still, the emphasis being slightly changed, human nature was denied the capacity to develop organs and functions for its own preservation and perfection.

d) Nevertheless, the change from mediaevalism to classicism, with its implication of choice between rival and alternative systems of external control, limbered things up a little. Humanism prepared the way for the new and greater thought of the eighteenth century: Humanity. This was no longer a scholastic, but a practical matter. It was a new age which tried to see

the human not in the Greek and the Roman alone, but in all men; not in the nobility alone, but in the *bourgeoisie;* not in masters alone, but in slaves—aye, in black negro slaves proved by humanists to "have no souls," not to belong to mankind, declared by the "saints" in the other camp to be under the curse of Ham and destined and doomed by God to be slaves of the "Christians." Once again, this new age propounded the great question: What is man? And the answer that it made stirs one's blood still. The greatness and nobility of man! And his greatness did not depend upon what people he belonged to, what creed he confessed. No race and no color could deprive him of his right to the human name. This thought of humanity is the imperishable merit of deists in England, naturalists in France, of a Lessing, a Herder, a Kant in Germany, of our illustrious forefathers, taught by Paine and others, who wrote with their blood that all men are created free and equal.

These apostles of humanity no longer went to school to Greeks and Romans alone: they made the world at their feet their schoolhouse, and this world began to wrest itself from the past and to live a present life of its own. It was a new and greater reformation which this century of humanity celebrated, a "declaration of independence" not only from ancient Rome and its ecclesiastical duplicate but from every alien authority which repressed the man in man. It was a cry for federation not only with those who spoke the same language and confessed the same confession, but with all who achieved human goals and dedicated their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to the great cause of a common humanity.

e) But this eighteenth century, too, had its limits. This man of "humanity" was something vague, indefinite, something universal. The living, real, concrete, specific man, member of a given people, speaker of a given language, dweller in a given land,

this empirical man still suffered abbreviation. You have heard of the old monk, in the controversy over nominalism and realism, who was so enamored with the universal as the actual that he said he would no longer eat apples and peaches and pears and the like, but just fruit! If the human quality in all men is the rational, as these rationalists all declared, then reason must not be pitched too high, for there are so many men with reason so embryonic and undeveloped. Even the weak and scanty traces of the human in the feathered folk and wild are still human. This was an epoch-making concession. Instead of the angel-like saints of the church, instead of the classic Greeks and Romans of the humanists, instead of the abstract and lofty humanity of the rationalists, instead of any of these which were once idealized as models of the really human, we now have romanticism celebrating and glorifying the negro and the Indian, nature-men and nature-people, as the true types of hu-

manity. Therefore the century of "humanity" was transcended—pointing beyond itself to a new reformation. And the new insight which is exhilarating all of us today was born.

j) What is our answer to the question, What is man? Not the saint of the church, not the Greek or the Roman, not the finished product of the rationalist, not the forest-man and the nature-man, but a *task*, an *achievement*. Man *is* not until he *becomes*. To *become* means the work of *forming* and *ordering* the personal and the social. Individuality is an endowment, personality is an acquirement; nature-man is gift, culture-man is task. We *are* not men; our vocation is to *become* men. This means the development of the inchoate into *organic* life, personal and social. It means the humanization of all animal impulses and passions, the ennoblement of all that is rude and vulgar, the culture of all that is raw. To be a man is not to possess by donation the alien goods of thought, but

to develop from within a function of thinking of one's own. So for beauty, for truth, for goodness, for faith. In the struggle for existence this kind of life we call human comes to be the complex system of organs and functions that it is, high and low, personal and social, by means of which it is preserved and perfected. And think what a long human story it is! Think of the struggle that has been going on from a plumbless past by which the present organic achievement has been consummated! Our capacity to see and hear, to feel pleasure and pain, to think, to produce language and art and science and morality—all this the race had to achieve by the sweat of its brow as it tilled life's thorny fields, all this is no easy gift from without but an evolution and creation from within. There is no gift that is not at the same time a task. Has the organism an eye? It grows it. Has it a conscience, an ideal? It grows that, too. And think of the millenniums of work that have gone into such formations!

4. It will serve my purpose a little later if I remark upon another matter, most briefly, however. Think, for example, of a subsensational organism—how poor its environment; but when the organism has generated sensation, and not only sensation but perception and memory, imagination and reason, how increasingly rich the environment. It is in this way that it grows apparent to us that man in a real sense makes his own environment, is himself the author of that formed world in which he lives and moves and has his being. But I must not allow myself to be drawn aside to considerations with which I am not immediately concerned. I am interested primarily in the suggestion of self-equipment for the struggle of existence.

5. But I have now, with much patience, and with almost needless detail, laid the foundation in fact for what I must pass on to urge. As stated in the old first chapter of Genesis, it belongs to mankind—man individual and historical—to have domin-

ion over the earth. Man must achieve equilibration inwardly and outwardly. In every emergency he must be equal to that superior adjustment through which he comes out more than conqueror. Hence, at the call of need, there sprout out of him new powers. Some of these powers are so high that from the point of view of the biological in the lower sense we might speak of them as superbiological; from the point of view of the organic as the superorganic. But such terms are negative and contentless. The alternative, however, is to enrich the concept of the organic with all that reality which belongs to the highest human achievements. It will be carefully observed that this is what I have chosen to do. Doing so, I am exempt, of right, from the accusation of treating our best values as mere means to an end. Such is not the thought of an organism, in which nothing is mere means, but all ends as well. I shall have to return to this matter a little later, however.

III

1. It now remains for me to see if I can understand from this general point of view the place of religion in experience. Like science, art, morality, it belongs to the higher achievements of the soul. But how did the soul come by it? How did the needs arise which led to the creation of religion? In the process of human experience, in the soul's effort at a more facile control over a larger situation, there inevitably developed that retrospective and anticipatory thought, so important for its larger comprehension of conditions in which it must be supreme. For instance, the names and deeds of ancient kings, the formations of prehistoric seas and continents, past and future eclipses of sun and moon: these it must know. Knowledge intensively of the structure and behavior of things at its side: this, too, it must compass. For by virtue of such insight could the soul adapt itself

more circumspectly to a wider and more complex situation. Consequently, as I have just indicated, science and technique in the widest sense must be considered among the great results of its intellectual activity. But the point is that precisely the psychic equipment and functions through which the soul could achieve an easier and a wider victory over a larger area, exposed the soul, on this account more complex and consequently more vulnerable, to attacks for which its science and its technique were not adequate. The nemesis for its greater outlook and insight was the apprehension of factors in its situation for which it had yet no equipment; indeed, its equipment for such equilibration as had been supposed sufficient but increased the manifoldness of its menace. "Prescience, prescience," cried Rousseau, "this is the source of all our misery." The cry is an exaggeration, but points to the truth, the all-importance of which it is my mission to urge tonight.

2. There was primitive man. How dark and hidden the most important things were to him. He could not foresee tomorrow's weather, nor the outcome of the chase the day after, nor his fortune in the battle the day after that, nor could he be sure of the mind of the woman whom he loved, or at least who was weaving her spell about him. Think, too, of the manifold dangers which his larger knowledge disclosed to him, for which yet his organism was not competent. There were over-mastering foes, ferocious beasts, storms, earthquakes, conflagration, famine, sickness; and, above all, inescapable death. He sees all these—the terror and the horror that menace him—and he sees also that he encounters them defenselessly. It were enough to embitter the joy of his life, to fill his existence with anxiety and care. When his eye grew so sharp that it could see death, what joy was the sight of the bloom of the flower to him, or the blush of the morning sky? So, then, there were two evils: namely, the impenetrable dark-

ness of the future and the unconquerable might of hostile powers about him for which functions so far created were inadequate to secure dominion over the earth, or the equilibration without which there was no blessedness; and it was the need of help to cope with this terrible situation which impelled the soul to create religion, nay, which was religion. Man made the gods to do for him what he could not do for himself. After the analogy of experiences which he had otherwise made in cases of ignorance and helplessness, ideas were formed as to how he could be helped here.

3. Nowhere is there such a thing as creation out of nothing. We must wean ourselves from the habit of picturing the God of the universe as the Bible God of the Book of Genesis—a God who magically charmed things, with a word as a wand, out of nothing. There is no creation anywhere by magic—none by God's magic. "God" *works* to bring things to pass—

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works hard and ploddingly as we do, aye, experiences need and pain and failure in work, as we do. My Father works to this very hour, said John's Jesus. He everlastingly seeks to form the universe. And he needs time—millions of ages to organize all that is. Still this idea that God made things is not quite happy. Strictly speaking, he *makes* nothing, but lets things *grow*. Certainly he lets man grow. A *made mind* is a contradiction in terms—so Green and the Cairds, to say nothing of Master Hegel, taught all of us. But man grows in the use of stuff that has been grown—he comes from the infinities; thousands of threads from the infinities behind him knot in him, making him a part of the great whole. These threads are called the character, work, and race of the forefathers, age, civilization, climate, nature itself. By all these is man predetermined. Out of all these is he to achieve himself as a free personality and a member of society, itself similarly achieved.

Nowhere, then, is there creation out of nothing. The raw material, so to speak, from which the gods were made was already at the disposal of primitive man. One should pick up a number of items at this point. (*a*) Very early primitive man came to believe in the doubleness of his being, in his possessing a body externally visible, heavy, and a soul, also material, of course, but mobile, fine, shadowy. On account of his dreams, he had come to think of the mutual independence of the two. The soul left the body, flew into other regions, experienced strange things, and such a fancy as this helped him toward the thought of a free and easily available god. (*b*) Then there was the impressive phenomenon of death. Today a man is talking and walking, injuring or helping another; tomorrow he lies there stiff and speechless. What makes the difference? According to the thought of primitive man, something must have been present, some spirit in the living that was the peculiar bearer of the

energies and requirements, the friendly or hostile disposition, which now at death had taken its flight and its abode somewhere into the invisible and unknown. (*c*) This consideration quickly merges into a larger. A primitive tribe consisted of two parts: those that were living on this bank and shoal of time, and those that were no longer living here, but were not on that account dead. The invisible members—the fathers—according to a worthy human habit of all of us, were magnified and transfigured in power and authority, in sacredness and adorableness. Their very invisibility lent itself to this idealizing process. It was of the greatest service to the tribe to consider their system of control, in all its marvelous minuteness and scope, as an expression of the will of the invisibles. If the individual's hands and feet, deeds and gestures, words and thoughts, decisions and undertakings, are to be bound and restricted by a thousand regulations and precautions in the interest of adjustment to a world judged

to be so full of mysterious and uncanny evil, it were well to seek the source and sanction and support of such a system of *tabu* in the higher and wiser and mightier invisible world. The will of their "divine" ancestors became the natural explanation of the categorical form of tribal precepts. Today still it is customary to assert that our moral precepts came, not from man, but from God, and to suppose that on that account they are more serviceable and authoritative. Our own primitivity should help us to understand the workings of the primitive mind. (*d*) Still, again, were there not the obsessed of whom it was immediately felt that another being had entered into them and compelled them to fall to the ground or to lunge at a foe or a friend? What explanation, moreover, was there for the prophetic and the ecstatic than the presence of some indwelling demon? (*e*) Besides all this, back of all this, there was for the primitive man the "psychification" of each and of all reality. Primitive

man peopled everything between heaven and earth, animal and plant, rock and block, sea and fountain, storm and star, with demons and spirits. In everything human these higher beings took a hand.

This brings me to say a word about a matter of the utmost importance, which, however, I fear students of religion have too often overlooked. The forest is full of trees, but not all are yours; only those are yours that you build your house out of. The hills are studded with cliffs, but only those are yours which are to you as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The country is threaded with rivers, but only those are to you the channels of the water of life from which you drink, in which you bathe, on which the ships that bring you weal are sailing. Similarly, to primitive man, the world was full of invisible, man-like beings. But this was world-view; if this were all, there would be no religion. It is at best the raw material of religion in its objective aspect. Beings in the spirit-

world were not on that account gods. It was only when primitive man said, not god, but *my* god, that the material of religion was organized into the objective side of religion. Gods might come and gods might go in swift succession, like the dew of the morning or the flower that perishes in the day's heat, or the cloud that the wind drives away—aye, or the mood of a fickle child, but so long as they were the ones to whom the primitive man prayed, on whom he leaned, from whom he received his blessings and his duties and his destiny, they were *his* gods, and whatever the rest of the invisibles were or might become to him, they were not yet his gods. We are in a position today that helps us to understand this. The great trouble with us is that our God is no longer *ours*. He is the church's. We inherited him. He is no dwelling-place that we have built. We have him only by tradition. He was *original* before he became traditional. But our God must be *original* to us, as the church's God once

was to the church. To us the church's God is *a* God. But the whole history of men and of gods teaches us that the religious nature never says: "This is *a* God," but always: "This is *my* God." God is dead! cried Nietzsche. You can see in what sense this is true. Modern experience would not create the Trinity-God of the church, any more than it would create the Messiah of the primitive Christian community. Your religiousness is not that you have a God, it is your God-making capacity. And in a world strewn with dead gods, the question is whether modern humanity has, like the ancient, that religious need and capacity from which the bright consummate flower of the divine can grow.

But this is wandering thanklessly enough from my subject. Not all the manlike beings of the invisible world were gods to the primitive mind. The idea of a world of such beings would be the product of the scientific interest rather than of the reli-

gious sentiment. Only that idea is a religious idea which has its roots in the religious sentiment. The spirits that became "my gods" to a folk were not speculatively but practically arrived at; were not posited as explanatory, but as working hypothesis.

4. If I may now classify the points that I enumerated above, I might reduce them to two views of the origin of the belief in the gods. (*a*) According to one, the worship of ancestors, of the departed heads of the tribe, was the oldest form of religion. Thus the origin of religion is held to be *social.* (*b*) The other view derives religion from fear of the un-understood forces of nature. Thus the origin of religion is held to be *individual.* Each of these views is one-sided, and both together are of course inadequate. They do not comprehend the whole wide world of religious ideas. There are traces of religious life which are older than the tribal institution. And along with the gods that fear created, there are others created

by joy and the overflowing fulness of life, though these are not as old and original as the gods of fear, since primitive man also was an "infant crying in the night, an infant crying for the light and with no language but a cry." Add to this that so far the main thing is left unexplained still, viz.: What set man to making gods at all? But I see no more reason or difficulty in the question than in such questions as, What set man to making language, or art, or morality, or science—or, for the matter of that, What set the organism to making the eye? The gods were created for the sake of the most vital practical interests. They were created in the interest of overcoming the evils that beset the human organism and of appropriating the good that would redound to the weal of that organism. Mindful of how help had been furnished in situations wherein superior adjustment had been achieved—water had saved him in time of conflagration, a comrade, in the extremity

of war—primitive man created gods with which to meet emergencies that were beyond him. Need is the mother of the gods.

But besides the question of the motive and impulse to the formation of the world of the gods, one might ask another question: How does it come that man could work out such a world as this at all? Since our own religious faith confronts us as an element of human tradition, it was a long time before we awoke to ask such a question. Faith passed from teacher to pupil, from parent to child. But, as I said, this tradition did not originally make the faith; the faith made the tradition. If there were no mothers who told their children of God, if schools and churches ceased to name the name of God among men, would God die out of human life? If human nature has at last come to be such stuff as that, then of course the human time of religion is up. But I believe that, just as if you were to winnow absolutely every seed from some field, you would soon see tiny blades pierce up

through the soil—the seed coming from hidden depths, or dropped by some bird in its flight or wafted by vagrant winds from other shores—so the god-less heart would soon germinate again with the thought of God. Nothing could be falser than the old talk that man had religion because priests, for selfish ends, made it. The priest did not make religion; religion made the priest. Religion is as little a work of priests as language is of professors, or law of jurists. In the evolution of the race religion originally *became;* it was not artificially made. But how then was it possible that something could become "God" to men; how, on the basis of personal or social instincts, did men come to view some natural object, something impersonal, as human-like, and to transfer the forms and laws of their own life to that which was not their own life? Whether a departed ancestor was worshiped as god, or the sun, or the rosy-fingered dawn, or sacred tree or sacred stone or sacred animal, always it was a "thou"

which man opposed to his "I." The question as to the right and worth of this "thou" is the question as to the right and worth of the belief in God. If primitive man held that thunder and lightning, morning and evening sky, were deeds of the gods, if he worshiped dead men as living and present, the ultimate human basis of such a world of religious ideas was the very constitution of man himself, according to which he pictured all the natural and human processes with which he came into contact after the analogy of his own action and passion. He *built his own self*, with his own characteristics and motives, into the world, by means of his power which we call imagination or fantasy. Everywhere the world was the picture of his own being. To the ruler it meant dominion and caprice, to the slave, servility and subjection. In the world tribes discovered their tribal life, states their law and politics, empires their pretensions to supremacy; and this was the origin of their religion, viz., that they

humanized the world; this humanization of nature gave them their gods. It cannot be denied that our god-faith had its origin in human fantasy. But this is not the only human thing that has had its origin there. Art is a humanization of the world, too. Aye, so is even science. It is an instructive coincidence that precisely in our day, when the thinking, objective, burrowing understanding is celebrating its supreme triumph, human fantasy is about to be restored to its ancient throne of honor. At the beginning of the nineteenth century it was pronounced a folly to evaluate truth and poesy co-ordinately. In the age of rationalism, of "pure reason" —a light which, sure enough, never was on land or sea—it was a foregone conclusion that poesy excluded truth, and that therefore humanity should fight shy of poesy as completely as possible. Today the most advanced, the freest spirits, recognize in poesy the noblest fountain of truth, even the best and brightest form of truth, and

accord to some particular truth only so much life and power as it derives from the poetic fantasy. And you find the same general attitude on the part of those who investigate the genesis of what we call truth in the strict scientific sense of the word. If our eyes and ears borrow from nature the perceptions from which we then make the thoughts which pass muster as truth for us, still fantasy is jointly active in the very first impressions of the senses, in the contact of the senses with the world. Even our very sensations are no mere gifts to us, but creations by us. Were it not for our much-slandered fantasy, man would have no living picture of nature, but only an inextricable snare of impressions, and he would not even know that he had them. Man—even the man of science—must first order these impressions by *building his own life into them*, by giving his own life to them. Without this power of imagination we should see no light and color, hear no sound; from light and color, get no pic-

ture; from sound, no word; from tone, no melody. And so you see my point. We must take the ban from our instinctive faith in the sole saving logic of the heart. In the free air of the fantasy once again man may have intimations of his eternal connection with nature, and express the value of this connection in pictures of the divine. Man feels his own restless heart beating throughout the troubled and tumultuous universe. In forest and field, in glow of sun and glimmer of star, he discerns his fear and anxiety, his love and his anguish. Nature wears a human countenance. Human voices well up from the unsearchable deep of the world.

5. I know the protest which you are meditating against this whole account of the matter. Religion, being thus a subjective creation by the psychic, is an illusion, you say; and from such a point of view humanity has befooled itself from land to land and from century to century; for if we created the gods we wasted our time and

our energy in doing so, since such creations can illumine no ignorance and fortify no defenselessness. That is your protest. But you must let me say a number of things anent this protest. (*a*) I grant that the possibility of illusion here is the hereditary and constitutional foe of all religion. It was not Ingersoll, but Feuerbach, in 1846, nay, in substance it was Lucretius, long ago, and earlier still, Xenophanes, who said that the great discovery of this generation was not that God made man in his own image, but that man made God in his (man's) own image. Psychologically speaking, that is quite true. And I, too, have been exhibiting the human origin of religion. (*b*) To this there is the old alternative of the miraculous, divine origin of religion. You have heard the story of the music teacher who was lecturing to her class upon the origin of instrumentation. Some savage beating upon a hollow log, or listening to the weird wind sighing through reeds by the river's brink,

gained some hint of melody, some suggestion for a wind instrument. This was the humble beginning of which our majestic organ and our ordered music of the orchestra is the glorious end. So spoke the teacher. But the parish priest heard of it, and hastened to reveal that "all possible instruments of music were in the possession of man at the time of his creation in the Garden of Eden, and when man was thrust out of the Garden, he lost his knowledge of music and his capacity for instrumentation, and since then he has been engaged in an effort to recover what he then lost." The teacher smiled.

Now which was it? Were pipe-organs and Paderewskis first, or savages and winds whistling through grasses? Were marble palaces first, or bark huts back in the night and the swamp? It is the conclusion of the investigation and reflection of the modern world that the latter is the fact. I am saying this in no spirit that despises the day of small things. If I were build-

ing monuments, they would be not for Paderewski at the end, but for the soul that was the first to snatch some faint melody from the noises of the world; not for the palace-maker now, but for the man who arrived at the first thought of family and rude hut.

And which is right, the idea that the knowledge of God is a miraculous communication to man in his initial Godlike perfection, or that man and man's religion in every respect slowly came to be through the long processes of evolutionary growth? It is the conclusion of the investigation and reflection of the modern world that the latter is the fact. Upon this point I shall not waste more words.

(*c*) But there is a kindred conception which still has some vitality. The Christian religion is of special divine origin and is therefore "true," but all other religions are of human origin and therefore "false;" all gods are "false" gods except the God of the Christians (and Jews?), who is "true."

The underlying idea is that if a thing is from man, that is *prima facie* evidence that it is not true and not good. Similarly Plato and the Catholic church denied to man the capacity to originate ideals. In one way and another men have so long regarded human nature as damned and ruined in the core of it, that any opposition to the view is resented as iconoclastic. But from all this paralyzing pessimism we must conquer some honor for the human capacity of initiative and achievement. To deny to mankind the genesis and development of its own ideal is to deny to the human spirit the capacity to set its own goals, and this is to rob human nature of its dignity. Now it is the same thing in different form when the gods, when the religions, that man produces are pessimistically declared to be "false," and the Christian religion, which man did not produce, is declared on that account to be "true." The fact is that there never was a false god, that there never was a really false religion; unless you call

a child a false man. All religions had the same purpose; all were links in a chain which connects earth and heaven, and which is held and always was held by one and the same hand. All here on earth tends toward right, and truth, and perfection; nothing here on earth can ever be quite right, quite true, quite perfect, not even Christianity—or what is now called Christianity; certainly not, so long as it excludes all other religions, instead of loving and embracing what is good in each.

But there are other considerations to be urged against this offensive antithesis between the "true" and the "false" religions. And they may be finely urged in the language of Professor Bousset of Göttingen:

> The view here asserted that God allows the nations that have not accepted the revelation of the Old and New Testaments to go their own way, sinking deeper and deeper into darkness and decay is, if we consider the whole bearings of it, a narrow-minded and melancholy view of the history of humanity. It is, in truth, an irreligious and Godless attitude. Apart from its falsity, it is a danger-

ous apologetic for Christian theologians to attempt with great sagacity—apparently in order to maintain the honor of the Christian religion—to prove that the non-Christian religions are illusions, products of the imagination and the intense desire of mankind. For this apologetic entirely forgets that the very arts which it employs can be used against itself, and the very same arguments may be used to prove that the Christian religion is an illusion.

The whole trend of human history is opposed to this view. Far indeed from showing us an evolution from a higher to a lower civilization, or the arbitrary play of forces, history (in spite of many periods of stagnation and retrogression) shows us very clearly great and stable progress, a slowly developed but firm aspiration after higher ideas and a more intense life in which religion participates. The theologian who traces the history of religion from a higher to a lower plane does not see how he is entirely opposed to our knowledge of the intellectual life of mankind.

The whole history of religion and of free inquiry concerning religion is opposed to this theory. This shows us the history of the Old and the New Testament so closely connected with the religious history of the surrounding peoples and civilizations that the distinction between revealed and natural religion is impossible. The history of the Old

Testament religion shows us a progress from a lower to a higher stage, a slow growth from imperfection to perfection. Ecclesiastical history also reveals in the development of Christianity an ever purer conception—gradual, it is true—of the religion of the spirit and of truth which is displayed in the gospels. It is no question of, This religion is true, *that* is false; everywhere we perceive growth, evolution, imperfection striving toward perfection.[1]

With this conclusion of Bousset all scientific students of comparative religions are in full accord today. In the light of our comparative historical study, any claim to exclusiveness, selectedness, singularity, and incomparableness, on the part of Christianity as a positive religion, must be entirely abandoned, or at least reduced to a surrogate rarefied to a faint symbol. Human empires which have been hammered and hardened as for eternity have gone down. Peoples that once dictated their omnipotent wills to the whole known world

[1] D. Wilhelm Bousset, *Das Wesen der Religion dargestellt an ihrer Geschichte* (Halle, 1903). Einleitung, pp. 6–8. English translation by F. B. Low, *What is Religion?* (New York, 1907), pp. 7–9.

have vanished. Languages which once enthralled the civilized dwellers on all the Mediterranean shores are now reduced to a mummified existence in grammars and encyclopaedias and lexicons. And in view of this illimitable city of the dead, with its buried hopes and shattered illusions, we may not have the dogmatic courage to say with reference to any positive religion that what has been must continue to be. Modesty and sincerity become us.

(*d*) Closely allied to the foregoing is the advocacy of the "objective truth" of the Christian religion by an appeal to the external authority of a book of immediate divine origin. Thus the doctrines and commandments of this religion were "revealed." This, of course, is the Protestant position; I mean, the position of the mighty ecclesiastical Protestantism of post-Reformation history. Against this Protestantism of external authority, the Independents, appealing to the internal authority of the "inner light," or the "indwelling spirit,"

to the "competency of the soul" in religion, protested. Of these the Baptists were the chief.[1] But subsequently even the Baptists fell upon evil days, were catholicized, and out-poped the pope himself in the deification of an external authority. In our day, however, a few men, unafraid of the calumny and ridicule—hoary weapons, these—hurled at them by insolent and quarrelsome ecclesiastics, are seeking to recover the Baptist position of the autonomy of the

[1] From Rev. Leonhard Ragaz, of Basel, Switzerland, who is not a Baptist, I have been pleased, since writing the above, to note the following: "When the Reformation, after mighty beginnings, was again inclining in many respects toward Catholicism, those radical spirits had already appeared in whom those thoughts lived which move us today. I mean the *Baptists*. Against letter-worship they set the principle of the spirit, against tradition the "inner light," against church establishment by the state the brotherly unity of like-minded disciples of Jesus, against an inert Christianity of dogma the following of Christ. The ethical-social promises and demands of the gospel, its subjectivism and its brotherhood, its world-transforming radicalism, its message of the kingdom of God, had worked so marvelously upon these men that they were intoxicated with them. Repressed on the Continent, their spirit flamed up in the Puritanism of England, especially in Quakerism, streamed over to the New World, which it

human soul, for which our Baptist fathers fought, bled, and died. Still it is not meant that a Christian is not freely bound to God in and through a sacred tradition. It is not that he did not obtain this tradition through history as something which others believed and taught. It is not that there was nothing here to which he felt that he should hearken. A case may be made out in favor of the moral duty of the Christian to listen to what the sacred Scriptures say.

made into a world of freedom, and then returned with renovating power to Europe. It can be shown that a great part of that possession which the modern world calls its own, especially that is bound up with freedom, has grown up beside this stream. The soil on which we are here gathered with thankfulness and pride has been blessed by it with ethical fruitfulness. A Channing, a Parker, an Emerson, have here gloriously embodied, each in his own several way, the ethical power of the gospel. Standing upon this ground, we look forward with joy to a future in which Jesus' message of the kingdom of God shall complete its work, unfolding in ever more glorious shapes, to make the world free in the name of God."—Address on "The Ethical Basis of Liberal Christianity," in *Freedom and Fellowship in Religion* (Proceedings and Papers of the Fourth International Congress of Religious Liberals, held at Boston, September, 1907, pp. 508, 509).

But the point is that the custodians of authority were not content with urging that the Scriptures be heard—they demanded that the Scriptures should be *held to be true.* There was no difficulty here even, provided that one did actually hold them to be true; and in a former stage of culture, with a former view of the world and of man, this could be done. But a great change has taken place, and a deep and unbridgeable chasm separates men from many of those thoughts and specific commandments which are imbedded in the Bible. In this modern world, if one should still hearken to biblical commandments and ideas *as such*, and hold that such subjection was faith, was religion, then the word faith would receive its most dangerous meaning. The definition would point to what has ever been one of the ugliest features of the church, viz., that to have faith is to hold something to be true which one does not in fact hold to be true. Thus faith comes to be unveraciousness. What is fatal to

orthodoxy today is that in sticking to its "truths" it has lost its truthfulness. Besides, an authority which I really feel to be such does not give me the right to use any one of its thoughts as my own which is not inwardly my own. Regard for the sacred Scriptures is a duty of the Christian; but to require assent to its thoughts and commandments is to lead into sin; and such requirement is itself sinful. It is this point that Professor Hermann, of Marburg, has spent so much of his life in urging. Grievous moral injury is inflicted today by the church in its insistence that men shall hold those views to be true in religion which have become false in science. Indeed, in the case of not a few persons, it is precisely that which should be the greatest power on the side of the church which has become the greatest enemy of the church, namely, the power of conscience. It is on account of conscience itself that the former authority by which the truth of religion was validated simply arouses men to

rebellion against the ecclesiastical type of religion.

(*e*) But there is still another way by which men have tried to vindicate the verity of religion. And here I have to deal with more difficult and weighty matters. A moment ago I was speaking words of praise for those independents who in the olden times protested against the Protestants. And I must begin there again. The Protestant theory of external authority—there is much misapprehension on this point—was devised as a polemic against the Independents rather than against the papacy. As I have already said, Independents held that the authority for the "truth" of religion was internal. This is their merit. On this account they, and not the great Protestant churches, were the real forerunners of the modern man. But with all this praise it must now be pointed out that even these Independents, like John the Baptist, belonged in some important respects to the old dispensation of law, and not to the new,

of freedom. That "inner light," by whatever name, and in all the *nuances* with which it was defined from sect to sect, this new authority by which the "truth" of religious belief was attested, inner though it was, *was not on that account human.* Within man, it was not of man. It was a knowledge of God which did not spring from life, but was supplied to life from alien sources. It was superhuman, therefore it was true. That was their conviction. You see, then, that for all alike—Catholic, Protestant, Independent—religion was knowledge of God; for all alike, the validity of this knowledge was assured by virtue of its superhuman divine origin. With such an origin, its truth was beyond question. The difference was that the immediate bearer of the knowledge was the pope or the book for the ecclesiastics, all men for the Independents.

I have returned to the position of the Independents that I may connect therewith a later point of view. You have heard much

about a priori knowledge. What is meant thereby is that there are general truths, independent of experience, and on that account clear and certain by themselves, and inwardly necessary. It too is knowledge not taken from experience. Kindred and continuous with the Independents, we yet have here a distinct step in advance. A priori knowledge was both *inner* and *human*. The categories belonged to the structure of the human mind itself and conditioned the possibility of experience. Consequently they were antecedent to and independent of experience. They were human endowments and not human achievements. But being thus antecedent to the process of concrete experience, that is, a priori, they were accorded the dignity of that divinity and certainty which the old authority of pope and book and "inner light" had in principle lost. The knowledge of cause, space, time, for example, was indubitable.

Similarly, for the theologian the knowl-

edge of God is not derived from experience, but is "intuitive," like the logical axiom of the principle of identity, and like the "eternal truths" of mathematics, points above and beyond all experience. Apriority of the knowledge of God is guaranty of the truth of the knowledge of God; for apriority is in origin metempirical, superhuman, divine, much as it belongs to the constitution of man. The knowledge of God is of man's nature, not of his experience, therefore it is true. Man's nature is not of man, but of God.

Briefly, then, this is the ground of religious certainty, according to those old philosophical theologians. You know who they were—in religion, not Kant. He believed in a priori knowledge, indeed, but not of God. According to Kant, God was no necessity of thought, but of moral conduct. Nor Schleiermacher. To him, God was neither a necessity of thought nor of conduct, but of the feeling of dependence. They were the long line of rational-

ists, from Descartes on. Yet Kant and Schleiermacher also relied, each in his own way, upon a religious a priori.

But in opposition to all this, the experimental character of *all* our knowledge has at length become evident. The static notion of truth has given way to the dynamic. Categories have a natural history, like everything else. Aprioris have come to be. It is not denied that they condition further experience; it is affirmed that they are products of experience. The backbone, fixed and hard, too, as it seems to be, supporting the bodily processes, is product of life. So with the backbone of knowledge. It should suffice to say that if we take the idea of evolution seriously we must apply it thoroughly and consistently. Doing so, papal authority and biblical authority and inner-light authority and a priori authority must be an effect of experience before they in turn become cause of experience. Thus entrenched supernaturalism is routed from its final citadel. The categories are them-

selves products of the concrete procesess of experience—no matter what those categories may be. The recognition that experience creates its own forms is now as universal as the idea of development.

The evolutionary point of view has had more than one important result for philosophical thought. Not the least important among these has been the conception of the evolution of evolution. Not only can we trace in the history of thought the evolution of the conception of evolution, but we find ourselves with a consciousness which we conceive of as evolved; the contents and the forms of these contents can be looked upon as the products of development. Among these contents and forms are found the temporal and spatial qualities of things, of the world. The very time process, as well as the space of the universe, lies in experience which is itself presented as the result of an evolution that arises in and through spatial conditions, which is first and foremost a temporal process.[1]

Some scientists, like Poincaré, hold that even the number system, as well as Eucli-

[1] From a masterly article entitled "The Philosophical Basis of Ethics," by my colleague, Professor George H. Mead, in *International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. XVIII, No. 3, p. 311.

dean space, is but a construction which has arisen and maintained itself because of its practical advantages.

The outcome is that there is no a priori knowledge—meaning by that knowledge antecedent to and independent of all experience. The categories are creations of experience—to be explained by the same general laws as those which are appealed to, to account for animal organs and functions. Their validity is to be determined, not by referring them to some hypothetical, supernatural cause, but by observing their value to the life of the human spirit. So with the religious a priori. A man creates whatever concepts and principles he may need in order to make himself master of phenomena and of his environment. To the same end were the gods created.

(*f*) But this long *excursus* should not close without some attention to a final superexperiential source of religious certainty. As authority became discredited and men estranged from the church, attempt

was made to prove scientifically that there was a God and a living soul; but all who are familiar with the character of scientific proof know how the reality of things is now proved. It is recognized that an idea of a thing contributes to bringing order and system among our ideas, or to carrying through the thought of the regularity of reality. Therefore scientific proof can always lead only to things which condition other things and which are equally conditioned by them. It is at once evident that a reality thus proved, or capable of being thus proved, cannot be the God of religion. It has grown clear to all thinkers, first, that the God and soul of religion cannot be proved with proofs that compel the assent of the intellect, and secondly, that by such proofs there is, in a serious degree, the destruction of the values which are sought to be demonstrated. I mean that the demonstration of God is the depotentiation of God. You take the God of Descartes, for example; and it is evident that the idea is

but an epistemological device which the religion of the human heart would repudiate. The theistic argument has ever been dangerous to religion, not simply because it was unconvincing, but because it ever converted religion into a system of beliefs which were required to be held as true.

I have previously intimated—and it is a matter that interests me more and more—that in the ultimate push, orthodoxy and rationalism amount to the same thing. Both hold to the primacy of idea in religion, differing only as to what the idea is and as to the mode of validation of that idea. But both are discredited by the psychology of experience itself, for psychology shows that idea is not primary but derivative—not cause, but effect; not the value which satisfies the human heart, but the instrument of our toil. It is not the God-idea even that is the main thing in religion, but those inner motives of will and of feeling in the service of which the God-idea is created.

But my main purpose in referring to the speculative vindication of the right of religious faith in experience is of a piece with what has gone before. Certainty by demonstration is superexperiential, for the most part. Such certainty may be independent of the *moral disposition*. In that event, religious faith has no personal moral significance. It is too cheap and easy. Besides, an idea which has not been produced by man's deepest life cannot fitly and safely be guide and criterion of that life. In short, the "proofs" of the existence of God, unflecked by the stains of concrete experience, are only sterile survivals of the old supernaturalism.

With these all-too-brief remarks upon great but related subjects this *détour* must be brought to a close. The old forms of authoritatively or speculatively vindicating the right of religious faith have become unusable. They can no longer stand before the judgment-seat of the scientific and moral conscience. Religion is not the kind

of reality that can be demonstrated by proofs which compel the assent of the intellect. As a matter of fact, the question of the "truth of religion," as former generations used the phrase, has died out of the consciousness of the modern man. The man of today must think of religion as a necessary creation of human nature and evaluate it from that point of view, or else be excused from further interest in the old problems of God and freedom and immortality. "*Man is so made* that he must make gods," is the way that a Chicago judge stated it to me the other day. That which is temporal and local in religion is the confessional, the ceremonial, the ritual; the supertemporal, superlocal, so to speak, I believe to be this inextinguishable need of human nature to create gods for itself, and so ever to replace old gods by new.

6. But I have now swung around the circle and find myself back at the point from which I started. If I have succeeded in showing that the foundations of the tra-

ditional vindications of the truth of religion have been sapped, the reproach that according to my account of the matter religion is illusion, is still on my hands. While I am not sure that the reproach can be entirely removed for everybody, there are yet some considerations which I should like to urge. Of course, I have admitted that it is the natural scruple against religion. But, for one thing, even admitting the truth of the reproach, is it quite self-evident that illusion has no function in experience? These all died in faith, not having received the promises. God promised Canaan to Abraham, and yet Abraham never inherited Canaan. All he had was a few feet of earth, obtained by purchase—dying at last as a stranger and a pilgrim in the land. Instead of the land of their dreams, a land flowing with milk and honey, his descendants found toil and war and unrest and captivity. "We, which are alive, and remain until the coming of our Lord"—did the Messiah come? Was the warrior Jehovah of old

Israel an actual individual? To a child a rainbow is a real thing—substantial and palpable; to the educated man it is an illusion, but it does not deceive him. Then does illusion have some meaning? May it be useful, or is it only injurious? Is it not surprising that we do not reproach our illusions—though our senses deceive us, and our natural anticipations deceive us, and our expectations deceive us? Similarly, many students of religion who have held that religion is illusion have declared that the illusion was useful. I, too, think that there is an element of illusion in religion—think of the phenomena of prayer, in some of its aspects, for example—but I doubt if at bottom it be greater than that in other forms of consciousness. Generally speaking, moreover, the fear of illusion is the bitter fruit of speculation dissociated from life, and not the practical outcome of really living in religion. Indeed, the man who *really lives in* religion, deriving the strength and recuperation and meaning of his life

therefrom, will not be haunted by this dread of illusion.

But, for another thing, the paralysis of such a dread is often due to failure to distinguish between the essential and the accidental in religion. Historic fact, saving truths, dogma, cult, institution, idea, even *God-ideas* —these usually crystallized external forms of religion must be from time to time broken up, changed, changed by the life for the life, else

they may prove even harmful, by filling the consciousness with trumpery that has little relation to conduct or to the life of appreciation. . . . . The forms and symbols of religion *might* prove helpful. Religion is the warm, intimate life of individuals as they give expression in a heartfelt way to the profounder impulses within them. It is the purposeful will in action, hungering after the infinitely good, the true, and the beautiful. . . . . Animals lead a warm, pulsing life of courage and hope, and then leave behind them shells or imprints or skeletons.[1]

But, lacking the wisdom of animals, man, especially the orthodox man, identifies the

[1] Starbuck.

dried and petrified remains of religion with religion itself. Hence the reflective mind, accepting the identification, finding no living power and help in such orthodoxy, easily concludes that all is illusion. By so much as religion is looked upon as something to be traditionally or didactically superadded to life, and not as a natural phenomenon that is ever recurring in the hearts of men, and is trying to spring up and grow wherever a child is born into the world, by so much is the suspicion of the unrealness and illusion inevitable, and, perhaps, useful as the negative side of the revitalization of religion. Here, too, a little child may lead us. Your children have religion—as they have love—before they can understand anything about what you would like to teach them in religion, before they have ever heard the name of God, or have named him themselves. Do you not see their happy laugh when you lovingly greet them? how they stretch out their little hands to you when you come into

their room? Natural instinct, you say. Yes, yes; but it is the same instinct which leads man to religion, which is religion—the natural instinct of love which yearns after the communion of another Love, which looks around for help, for a foothold in helplessness and weakness; it is the most original and most simple supplication with which a poor heart struggles loose from the earth. That you are parents—the child knows as little of this as it does of the Power which we call God. But at the sound of your voice, at the look in your eyes, something supersensible, something invisible shines into the soul and awakens there larger and fuller life. You are to your child, not simply the hand that gives it food and guides its steps; you are the first prophets, the first angels of God, revelations of a higher power that molds its life humanly. Again, look at the child playing with its doll, a miserable sawdust thing, or a dirty bundle of rags. Your critical eye smiles at the childish play. But

there is a profound, sacred meaning in this childish play for that little heart. The doll is a shrine because it gives the child something for which it can care, something which it can cherish and protect; and all this dead, worthless plaything is living to the child's spirit. This plaything takes all the cripples, the lame, and the blind in the child's room upon its heart, and invites them to a feast of love which the child offers them in its play. This is religion; religion of a child, of course, but religion just the same. Still, again, the gaze of the child wanders out into the world. The world blooms and glows and grows; it lives and weaves. A miracle of life is enacted in the flower at the window; redemption from fear of the dark greets it in the streak of lightning. It stands still in reverent awe before the un-understood, the uncomprehended, which it dare not touch, but to which it feels itself drawn as by magic power. Of course the child learns the things about it better and better, and

they are harmless; awe vanishes after it has seen them from day to day, and it puts its foot upon them. But it sees no end to the world. It runs after the colors of the rainbow, but they vanish into infinity. It climbs the mountains about its home, where the world seems to end, but it sees only new greater worlds stretching out before it. This, too, is religion, riper, higher than that of the cradle and the nursery. It is the intimation of the infinite and eternal. Another step, and the child's spirit is in the presence of the All-embracing, the All-preserving.

We have here all the living constituents —to be more formally stated later in my address—the peculiar, primary elements of religion. We do not have to make them by our teaching. We cannot do so. The whole nurture of religion has to do nothing more important and more requisite than simply to protect this living germ of religion, to supply it with nourishment until it grows strong—*and to let it alone*. But it is pre-

cisely this that we do not do, and we think that, instead of this, we must do something else, something fundamentally perverse. The Natural is too natural for us, even in the religion of a child. It is too slow. You do not see enough of it from without. So we think we must help Nature. We tack on to it all sorts of artificial tinsel. The child must be a "little man" in religion, also; it must have a man's kind of religion, only not so much in quantity. And because the imitative talent in the case of the child is so great, it quickly speaks the language of pious usage far in the heart of the land of Canaan; and if it is a clever and knowing child it tunes its inner life to the holy tones of its elders, and the end is hypocrisy or—*illusion*.[1] What is true of all training is especially true of religious

[1] The other Sunday a lad of sixteen came from the church's young people's society, and said: "Father, I am to lead the meeting next time, and the programme committee has given me the subject of 'The Theological Significance of the Atonement.' Isn't that going some? Where can I get something on it?"

training: the injury of the too-much is incomparably greater than that of the too little. You can smother a child as well as a plant. Both must grow secretly, tenderly. It is precisely this too-much which gives a sort of demonic power over the child heart to the deadly foe of all religion, namely, the pious phrase, the pious talk at random.

Now, suppose we put the accent on the spirit, not on the letter. Will not the sense of reality keep us from the fear of illusion? Suppose we think of the child above as religious in its dependence and helpfulness and wondering awe, then, as the "objects" on which it depends, or for which it works, or at which it wonders, may change, as change they must, the conclusion that all is illusion will never be formed. Religion is fundamentally *life*, not the *form* of the life. The reality of art is the artistic spirit—this abides; not the book or the painting or the statue or the edifice—these perish. Were the fountains of the beautiful to be dried up

in the human spirit—that these petrifactions were art would linger for a time as memory —then the reality of art would be denied finally. If religion be primarily the created and not the human creator—primarily historic fact and dogma and ritual and institution and gods, and not the life and spirit of man that creates these expressions and forms and means of self-realization, its "seeming unreality" will pass on into the sense of its utter illusion.

Do you say that all this is beating about the bush? While I do not think that it is, I can see how you may think so. You say that the subjective origin of religious *faith* renders that faith unreliable and worthless, and that nothing which I have said squarely meets this issue. Then let us try again. Faith is of three kinds. There are the faith that reposes on sense-perception, authority faith, and the faith which is a creation in response to the deepest need of the soul. On the basis of sense-perception, I believe that this desk is. I cannot prove

that it is, but I get on better by holding that it is than otherwise. On the basis of authority of others, I hold that Socrates and Jesus probably lived. Then, thirdly, there is the faith that is grounded in our need. I have faith in my future. I cannot prove that I have a future that is worth while, but without such a conviction I could not live. Madness lies that way. The mother has faith in her boy. His father has his doubts about him. The neighbors think he is in a bad way, and the odds appear to be against him, but his mother says she cannot live and endure the thought that her boy shall go to ruin. She must have faith in him or her heart is broken. Napoleon had faith in his star. The general believes that he will win in the battle on the morrow. If he does not, he is half-whipped already. Now, what sort of validation is there for any of these experiences? By what proof can you compel the intellect to assent to such convictions? It is simply that the life needs them in its deepest intentions and

yearnings and processes, and the soul generates them on that account. So the gods were made to meet the deepest needs, and the cry of those needs is thereby answered. In all these cases we are dealing with *convictions*, not knowledge which can be authenticated and enforced by logical demonstrations, but *faiths which grow out of the requirements of personality.*

In Professor James's larger *Psychology* I have often been struck with the following passage:

> Of all these wider, more potential selves, *the potential social self* is the most interesting, by reason of certain apparent paradoxes to which it leads in conduct, and by reason of its connection with our moral and religious life. When for motives of honor and conscience I brave the condemnation of my own family, club, and "set;" when, as a Protestant, I turn Catholic; as a Catholic, a freethinker; as a "regular practitioner," homeopath, or what not, I am always inwardly strengthened in my course and steeled against the loss of my actual social self by the thought of the other and better *possible* social judges than those whose verdict goes

against me now. The ideal social self which I thus seek in appealing to their decision may be very remote: it may be represented as barely possible. I may not hope for its realization during my lifetime; I may even expect the future generations, which would approve me if they knew me, to know nothing about me when I am dead and gone. Yet still the emotion that beckons me on is indubitably the pursuit of an ideal social self, of a self that is at least *worthy* of approving recognition by the highest *possible* judging companion, if such companion there be. This self is the true, the intimate, the ultimate, the permanent Me which I seek. This judge is God, the Absolute Mind, the "Great Companion." We hear, in these days of scientific enlightenment, a great deal of discussion about the efficacy of prayer; and many reasons are given us why we should not pray, while others are given us why we should. But in all this very little is said of the reason why we *do* pray, which is simply that we cannot *help* praying. It seems probable that, in spite of all that "science" may do to the contrary, men will continue to pray to the end of time, unless their mental nature changes in a manner which nothing we know should lead us to expect. The impulse to pray is a necessary consequence of the fact that while the innermost of the empirical selves of a man is a self of the *social*

sort, it yet can find its only adequate *Socius* in an ideal world.[1]

Upon this fine passage I do not need to remark, unless it be to observe that James identifies God with an ideal tribunal, or with an ideal world, or with the "permanent Me which I seek;" and that if the ideal be not as actual to your way of thinking as desks and trees and seas and stars, you will accuse James of preaching the unreality of God; and that, finally, the ideal is not a donation to the human from afar, but the bright consummate flower which has grown from the soil of our common humanity. Furthermore, in this way you gain the insight that ultimately your real authority is self-authority and your real obedience is self-obedience.

You see what I mean; if the validity and value of our ideas and ideals are jeopardized by the subjectivity of their origin, nothing human is valid or valuable. Are not our moral standards, are not our

[1] *Psychology*, Vol. I, pp. 315 ff.

scientific formulae, are not our artistic creations, are not our languages, products of the subjective needs and activities of mankind? But do you discredit the reality and function of these because you made them? Rather, is not the fact that they were achieved to meet human need, is not the fact that they are of the human, by the human, the best sort of evidence that they are also for the human? If religion stands the test by which you try every other human creation—namely, the test of contributing to the rich and full development of the ideal interest of humanity—if, in a word, religion stands the test of workability and of service equally with other subjective creations like art and language and morality, what more have we a right to demand? If the organism makes the eye because it needs the eye, sensation because the knowledge process requires it, and a moral ideal because the goal of the will is compassed thereby, why may not the creation of religion for precisely the same reason (since

it is as universal as any of these in human experience) be adjudged to function as serviceably in its way as they do in theirs? But have we a right to demand more than this of religion? I mean by the above that universality proves not "truth" or necessity, but usefulness, especially of so basic a function as religion.

But the form of our religious faith is such by heritage that I cannot meet the issue squarely unless I say something of what is more definitely involved in the name God. You ask, What of God? Well, then, what of God? I had hoped to defer this question to a later connection, but I see that I cannot entirely escape it here. Coming across the continent to your beautiful Berkeley, one is impressed day after day with the vastness of that Utah desert—that empty, homeless, shoreless waste whose monotony is relieved a little here and there only by naked mountains lifting cragged summits aloft and piercing the blue above. Is that apocalypse of

vacuity but a symbol of cosmic sterility? Is the Voice we sometimes seem to hear but the sound of our own wishes, echoing through the vast void of nothingness? Is there no "soul of loveliness" at the center of being which calls unto the soul of man as deep unto deep? There are few of us who have not felt the anguish of such a query. In the beautiful story of the patriarch Jacob, you remember the occasion of his meeting with his brother Esau. One night he pitched his tent, and the caravan of women and children and flocks, helpless and defenseless, was at rest, but Jacob in vision saw another Camp of the Lord's host above him, whose strength protected the weakness of the camp on the earth. Is life a Mahanaim—two camps, a heavenly to shelter and shield our poor earthly tents? Is there a heavenly Soldier, a heavenly Pilgrim, a heavenly Sufferer, who is ever at our side as we plod through the burning sand? You know how a positive faith here warms and cheers the heart in the days

of the years of our pilgrimage. If your foot trip as you walk down a stairway, you put out your hand to the wall for support—aye, you put out your hand whether there be any wall there or not. Is there some Eternal Wall in things strong enough to give us stay when our feet slip?

I have tried to talk in the language of the heart. It is the language of *comfort.* And experience justifies expectation of comfort. I do not believe that even a mother's broken heart proves that there is no kind Providence in the world. Nevertheless, it does not appear that the values that are dear to us are equally dear to the Infinite Care. We find that there must be a transvaluation of values on our part if the struggle of existence is not often to leave us comfortless. There often seems to be a want of harmony between our experience and our faith in the "conservation of value." Upon this general matter of comfort wise words are spoken by Höffding:

Speaking generally, it is a dangerous principle that we must be consoled at any price. We may learn much here from the old mystics. The author of the *De Imitatione* says again and again that a man must love Jesus for Jesus' sake and not for his own consolation (*propria consolatio*); they who are always searching for consolation are hirelings. And when Suso asked a holy monk, who revealed himself to him in a vision after his death, what exercise was at once the most painful and the most efficacious, he was told that no discipline is so painful, and at the same time so searching, as to be forsaken by God, for then a man gives up his own will and submits for the sake of the will of God to be robbed of his God. Where self-consolation is the ultimate goal, piety passes over into egoism.[1]

What cravings and interests of ours, then, may we be more reasonably certain shall be satisfied? It would seem that they were our ideals. Certainly ours is an ideal-achieving capacity. But the fruits of the ideal are grown and borne by a tree whose

[1] Harald Höffding, *The Philosophy of Religion* (transl. by B. E. Meyer), p. 345, London, 1906; *Religionsphilosophie* (transl. into German by F. Bendixen), p. 311, Leipzig, 1901.

roots strike deep into the soil of the real. We who achieve ideals are a part of existence as a whole. Therefore we may assume that existence as a whole has an ideal-achieving capacity. The world is such as to produce ideals, or, at all events, such that ideals may be produced. Whether the world is *for the sake of* ideals—this we may not surely know. "Without man the world would be vacant of value, for there would be nobody to value it; there would be no thought in it, no sense of beauty, no apprehension of right and wrong, no learning, no culture."[1] Still—and this is my point—the content of our God-faith is the conviction that in spite of much that is dark and inharmonious in the world, reality is on the side of the achievement of ideals such as ours. But in that case, if our goods are ideals, if our heart's desire be the goals of the true, the beautiful, and the good, if our yearning be for the ideal perfection of ourselves and our kind, if all

[1] *The Independent*, February 4, 1909, p. 269.

our time and strength be devoted to such an end as this, we may have the comfort and the encouragement of the conviction of its attainability. The evidence of experience is that the structure and function of the universe are such that ideals are by us achievable. But that which supports and comprehends within itself all ideal values, that which is seen to be the origin and consummation of all values, must be the object of deepest feeling on our part—the object of our highest trust and love. The word God is a symbol to designate the universe in its ideal-achieving capacity. It is the expression of our appreciation of existence, when our feelings are so excited as to assign worth to existence. But all our highest ideas are but figurative expressions. Even the concept of a personal God has symbolic validity only. And the function of a symbol is not to give an exact report concerning the nature of an object, but to express the appreciations of the subject. However, since personality is our highest

idea, it must ever be on that account the word which most fittingly symbolizes our experience of the relation of reality to our ideal values. It is in our human personalities, and, so far as we know, in these alone, that this relation immediately comes to light. To say that we are so made that we must make gods is tantamount to saying that we are so made that we must make ideals. To express the whole matter briefly, our vocation is to achieve ideal values; religion is the conviction that such values are by us achievable, in virtue of our constitution and of the constitution of that whole of which we are a part. Religion, in a word, is self-effectuation. The worth of such conviction in fulfilling the task is evident.

I may return then to my more biological mode of statement. Does religion contribute to the rich and deep unfolding of the life of the human spirit? (By spirit I mean always the psycho-physiological organism in its ideal-producing capacity.) Has re-

ligion always rendered, and does it render still, some functional service on account of which it has the same right to be that language or art or morality has? If so, why should there be a different mode of validation of the right of religion to a place in experience from that of the right of these other servants of the higher life of man? Is not religion simply one of the modes by which mankind effects inner and outer equilibration in its situation? Is not religion that psychological phenomenon of the soul's superior adaptation to the evil consequences of anticipatory forethought and the warding off of those evils in the use of the means at its disposal? And has not man created and adored the gods that served him in those interests for which otherwise he found that he was unequal, on account of his ignorance and his weakness? Take an illustration. One of the lowest tribes in Ceylon—the Veddahs—knows no agriculture and uses no fire. At times they seek the deepest forests and

thickets, where they dance their wild nocturnal dance around a huge arrow stuck in the ground. With rhythmic supplications and thanksgiving, finally with ecstasy, the dance goes on. There is no spirit, no god, in the arrow, but the arrow is the center of their existence, the cardinal means of their preservation. Around the arrow their whole meaning revolves. In every important hour, in sickness and in need, the arrow is worshiped. A power radiates from the arrow in those nocturnal excitements which reconstructs their whole world. The arrow helps and will help. It triumphs over hostile nature. The very world exists in order to serve that arrow, which man needs and by which all opposition is overcome. Now, there is a direct line of ascent throughout the long human story, from the ecstasy of those feathered folk and wild who have attained as yet no real belief in spirits, to the religion in spirit and in truth of the noblest modern church. The arrow thought and the God-thought

fulfil the same function of equilibration, the unification of triumph and satisfaction and peace. To be sure, the kind of thing that satisfied human life there at the bottom, and the kind that satisfies human life here at the top, are very different. The man of Ceylon adored his arrow because it brought him his dinner; the man of higher culture adores his God because his God brings him moral harmony and spiritual blessedness. At the bottom, religion was the conviction of the achievability through the arrow of satisfactions of a lower kind, indeed; but at the top religion is the conviction of achievability through a cosmic God of universally valid satisfactions of the human personality. But each in its own way, each instigated by motives of human need, arrived at the notion of a reality through which it received its satisfying portion.

IV

There are many interesting stages in this pilgrimage from the lower to the higher, and I must ask you to think a little of some of the more important of them.

1. Generally the primitive man used not something like the arrow, but something like the human *psyche* which he thought was in things, as his god. And like men, these gods were capable of two kinds of attitude. They could be hostile, tricky, malicious; they could also be friendly, helpful, kind. But because primitive man knew from experience how to deal with men, he was sure that he knew how to deal with his gods, who he thought were like men. Hence he importuned his gods, or flattered them, or threatened them, or promised gifts of honor to them, prayer, vows, sacrifices—ever according to circumstances are the means to be employed in accomplishing his end.

Furthermore, it was noticeable that some persons were more skilful in securing the services of the gods than others. On this account it would seem advisable to avail oneself of the good offices of such superior or obsessed men. Such men, of course, became the priests, through whose ability to predict ignorance was dispelled, and through whose power of magic weakness was made strength. The prophecy and the prayer of higher religion came about through a long development of prediction and magic from such rude beginnings.

But the maintenance of faith in the gods required substantial agreement between the expectations and the experiences of the devotees. Did the prediction of the future agree with the course of events? Was the danger which menaced averted by the magic of which the priest was master? Then one had the clearest proof of the help of one's god, of the power of one's god, of the truth of faith. But perhaps the result of the prayer and of the offering disappointed

expectations. What then? It was a bitter moment. Agony of doubt, a sense of ignorance for which there was no illumination, of weakness for which there was no defense, must have terrorized the soul. And yet religion, like almost everything else, puts off dying, as the last thing it will do. Adjustment and readjustment will be undertaken in the interest of self-preservation, on this side of life as well as on others. Perhaps the prayer was not importunate enough; perhaps the sacrifice was not offered in the right way, or at the right place. Jerusalem is the place where men ought to pray. Or it may be that the supplicant had offended God; then will he say to himself that he deserved the punishment of the divine silence, for does his God ever judge unrighteous judgment? Or, if the devotee believes that in his integrity he can stand before his God, even though his God knows his most secret thoughts, perhaps he will conclude that his God means to try him, to see whether his faith is firm

and his loyalty unshaken. So his God withholds from him health and goods. Or, if there be no other way of adjustment, the saint learns to say that the ways of his God are unsearchable and his ways past finding out; who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counsellor? My God acts according to his own wisdom, he says, and it is my place to humble myself before him. Now and then the saint looks about him and sees that the godless and blasphemous prosper, while he himself is in adversity. This, too, is a grievous moment, and the adjustment of his religion thereto is one of the most difficult problems of his life. But faith finds a solution. At length he comes to see that the saint must suffer, not for his own sins but for the sins of others. With his stripes others are healed. The bearer of the higher ideal is ever the victim of the vulgar reality about him. Finally, if all else fails, there is one way out. What is the present life but a preparation for the after life? Justice and happiness

alike require that there shall be an immortality, and that there the saint shall be rewarded for what he suffered here and the wicked shall be punished. If equilibration cannot be effected here, let the saint not despair. Things will be evened up on the other side, even if it takes eternal life for the one and eternal death for the other to square accounts.

So the religious man keeps his religion in spite of prayers that are not answered and promises that are not fulfilled. It is a part of the pathos and the tragedy, of the pain and the disappointment of which life is so full. The desperate lengths to which the man of religion goes, in effecting adjustments that his religion may survive, is a greater evidence of the essential and inalienable humanness of religion than can possibly be found in an external authority or in a scientific demonstration. But the most important point here is that at the call of need there sprout out of the organism new powers, new equipments, so that in its

self-qualification to survive, religion grows in depth and manifoldness.

2. This brings me to discuss the function of doubt in religion. Classic expression to both the pain and the purpose of it has been given by Matthew Arnold in his *Dover Beach:*

> The sea is calm tonight;
> The tide is full; the moon lies fair
> Upon the Straits; on the French coast the light
> Gleams and is gone; the cliffs of England stand,
> Glimmering and vast, out in the tranquil bay.
> Come to the window: sweet is the night-air!
> Only from the long line of spray
> Where the ebb meets the moon-blanched sand,
> Listen! you hear the grating roar
> Of pebbles which the waves suck back, and fling
> At their return, up the high strand,
> Begin and cease, and then again begin,
> With tremulous cadence slow, and bring
> The eternal note of sadness in.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Sophocles long ago
> Heard it on the Aegean, and it brought
> Into his mind the turbid ebb and flow

Of human misery; we
Find also in the sound a thought,
Hearing it by this distant northern sea.
The sea of faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled;
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating to the breath
Of the night-wind down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

. . . . . .

Ah, love! let us be true
To one another:[1] for the world which seems

[1] Note the implication of this, which should have saved Arnold from the thought of a meaningless and worthless world. There were love and fidelity between him and the beloved. But what was true for these two human beings was not true for them alone; the great race of men, of which they were a part, had the same capacity and significance. But from his own point of view man, the race, sprang from nature, the matrix of all life. Therefore nature was such that love and faithfulness were possible and achievable, faithfulness and love were rooted in the constitution of the world. But if that be true, we are *not* "here as on a darkling plain, swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, where ignorant armies clash by night."

Still, the function of doubt is critical, sober, thoughtful,

To lie before us like a land of dreams
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy nor love nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain,
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and
flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.

accurate, veracious; doubt is like the cold north wind, like the frost, which kills the gnats and mosquitoes but makes every higher being live with a fuller life. It is doubt that drives us from the worship of our ancestors that faith may bring on a better posterity, from our Edens that faith may make our wildernesses blossom as the rose, from our heavens that faith may make the earth a fit place to live in. As F. W. Robertson and Phillips Brooks ever reiterated, when you cannot hear the songs of angels, cannot say assuredly that you know the love of God, you still know that to be brave and true and pure is better than to be cowardly and false and foul. You do know that there are men and women all about you suffering, some of them dying, for sympathy and help; you do know that whether God loves you or not, right is right. Oftentimes when the cloud stretches itself across the heavens, then, underneath the cloud and shut out from the sunshine, you still find for yourself a rich life of duty, a life of self-control, a life of charity, a life of growth. Such is the sunnier side of Arnold's poem above: "Ah, love! let us be true to one another." In a word, if religious faith brings us blessedness, religious doubt may help us on to morality; but there is no blessedness without morality.

You see here how, with the first onset of Darwinism and biblical criticism, a brave knight of the spirit was unhorsed. But after such chaste and flawless lines how can one go on with one's own poor words?

I suppose that molting is a necessary vital process in the life of a bird. At such a time the bird doubtless suffers some pain, is songless and silent; but it gets new and clean feathers, and especially accommodates itself to the rotation of the seasons thereby. In due time the red of the rose grows dull and faded; but so only can its seed come and the life go on. An organism needs food, but there must be a process of elimination as well as of nutrition; indeed, organisms generally die from poison due to defective elimination rather than from starvation. Now, as I understand it, doubt is the purgative, eliminative, excretive side of religious experience, as faith is the nourishing; and, therefore, we are saved by doubt as well as by faith. It is the soul's molting time, or the flower dropping its

petals that the fruit may grow. To be sure, it is one thing for the bird's life itself to shed its feathers, quite another for you violently to pluck the feathers from its wings; one thing for the rose to drop its leaves, another for you to bruise them off. So it is one thing for the soul, as a part of its own growth, to excrete its waste material, another for you to force such a process upon it prematurely.

Nor is it meant that religious doubt does not belong to the most painful states of the inner life: on the contrary, it is often an experience wrung out of the loneliest and darkest bewilderment that can agonize a human soul. In his religion man often seeks a solid rock on which he can anchor his soul in the storm of life. That rock he calls his God. And what gives stay and steadiness to his existence, eternal worth to his personality, this he calls his faith. Faith is the power of an eternal life that helps him in his weakness. But in the event of religious doubt some solid rock has

turned into sinking sand; some fountain of living water at which the thirsty soul had quenched its thirst has dried up; some friendly and familiar star by which the ship had sailed has passed from sight as the ship moved on into new and untried seas. There is a painful sense of loss, of loneliness, of strangeness and uncertainty. Now who could reproach a man for seeking to protect himself against doubt? And is it not a duty of love which *others* owe to him to protect him from the upheavals of the inner life and to preserve the staff by which he had walked? Everyone instinctively clutches his dearest treasure. The soul has its treasure, too, of which it cannot lightly allow itself to be robbed, and whose worth it cannot indifferently see called in question.

Then are those in the right who would build a Chinese wall around their faith, so that no meddlesome spy, no disturber of the peace could enter into the inner kingdom of the soul? Are they the true friends

of the faith who would despatch an ecclesiastical police force to that part of the field where doubt is at work? Ah, here is the *vain* prerogative which all the reactionary forces of life arrogate to themselves! The bird must not molt, nor the blossoms fall, nor the organism release its dead matter. Such custodians of a people's faith tell us that they would not on any account disturb men's spiritual repose, that they would leave men alone if they are but contented and happy. Anent this matter, it is necessary to make two serious remarks. For one thing, this prerogative is often but a subterfuge or excuse for the ecclesiastics' (or politicians') lust for power, for their selfish exploitation of a contented humanity. Such, ever, is the witness which the long history of religion bears upon the subject. Hence religion has ever been a powerful weapon wielded by masters against slaves. It is not hard to see how this is so. Religion gives inner rest to men. But when men's minds are at rest, it is

much easier to make them satisfied with their lot than it is restless men.

Rulers have ever availed themselves of religion as a mighty agency in keeping under their unruly subjects—an agency more effective than brute force, since it arouses a less violent reaction. "How are the people to be saved from the Social Democrats, if they stop going to church?" said a sagacious German a little while ago. "A soldier without religion is a fool," said a general. "The people must be more religious, the welfare of the army demands it," said an emperor in an address to his subjects. "Throne and altar": this has ever been the watchword of kings.

But from another point of view, and more especially aside from such prostitution of religion—a point which I treat by itself a little later—the whole contention of these custodians of a people's faith is wrong and reprehensible. The true and wise lover and leader of his brothers will not shield them against doubt, but make them equal

to doubt, inspire them with strength to doubt. They will say to their brothers that religious doubt is not a disease of the soul, but is necessary to the health of the soul; that it does not signify decay or degeneration but rebirth—the mounting upward of a never-resting, never-rusting life. Often anxiety over doubt is simply artificially drilled into men. And such a policy is powerfully seconded by men's reverence for the past, by the deadening effect of habit, by their cowardice, by their devotion to custom, by their inertia that dares not discover but prefers to copy. Let men be once seized with this anxiety, and then they are inoculated with an entirely perverse evaluation of the true values of life. Whoever fears doubt, fears truth; for it is truth that casts the first shadow of doubt into the human spirit.

What then is the function of religious doubt in experience? Take an illustration. You and I have grown up in a world of thought which, because it was a religious

world, presented itself to us as an unconditioned, divine truth. This truth claimed to solve all the riddles of life. We were promised redemption from all uncertainty, the satisfaction of the deepest desires that were stirring in our souls, the stilling of our hunger for life and happiness and joy. Everything that heart could need or wish would be given us—*provided* we did exactly what this truth said, without subtraction, or addition, or objection, or doubt. For this truth was "divine" and "revealed," and therefore all other truths, however natural, however human, understood of sense and understanding, must be subordinate and inferior thereto. To believe in such "revealed" truth, to acknowledge its divinity, its unconditionateness—this was the soul's safety.

Then doubt began its work. The truth is absolute and infallible because it is "revealed," is it? "Revealed" truth is our security, is it? But then who goes security for this security? Ah, there's the

rub! There too is the rock on which (as I have pointed out elsewhere)[1] John Calvin's logic went to pieces. Who goes on the bond of him who assures us that God is triune, that a God-man provided an objective and finished salvation by blood-atonement, that he arose from the grave and ascended into "heaven," that "heaven" or "hell" awaits man? Ask the Catholic —ask him first, for he has the better answer: The church is warranty for faith; God gave the church everything that is needed for man's salvation; the church is God's vicar on earth, and therefore any doubt bearing upon what the church says and teaches is the ruin of the soul, is the eternal death of the soul. Ask the Protestant: The Bible says so, and the Bible is God's word, and therefore absolute truth, and sufficient truth; and the pastor studies the Bible, and the professor teaches the pastor how to study the Bible and how to interpret the Bible, and the pastor passes

[1] *Finality of the Christian Religion*, pp. 68–71.

his examination before a council of deacons and others, and is ordained by the laying on of hands—deacons' and others', who say that the pastor has the right kind of idea about what the Bible teaches. And now the pastor becomes court of final appeal, who tells the church members what to believe, what to hold true, and how to understand the Bible. By the pale light of the moon it is plain to be seen that the guarantee of ecclesiastical faith is some kind of alien authority—in the one case, that of the church, of the totality of Christians, embodied in the pope as visible head; in the other case, that of the pastor, of the professor, ecclesiastically "approved," who know how to interpret the Bible consistently with ecclesiatical beliefs; therefore authority of the church in both cases. Interesting circle, this Protestantism, especially when it declares: God, the unchangeable, deposits his changeless truth in the Bible, the professor tells the pastor what the Bible means, then the pastor tells the

church members; but then the church members say who the pastors shall be, and the pastors say who the professors shall be, and the professor says what the Bible means, and the Bible is God's word—and so you are back where you started from. But of course a circle is made up of points, and there must be interstices between the points—and that lets us out.

But it is doubt that keeps the circle from becoming something like "the Great Iron Wheel" against which J. R. Graves thundered in the South of my boyhood days. Ultimately, therefore, religious doubt is nothing but the first effort of a child to let go the hand by which it has been led hitherto and to walk alone; doubt is the awakening of the impulse to self-dependence, which accords as much worth to one's own self as to others, and trusts one's own self as much as others. See how this is: The church's claim to possess a divine, unconditionally certain truth reposes ultimately simply upon the church's own

testimony. It does not follow from this that the testimony of the church in its own case is not true. But the point is that the witness which we bear in the deep of our own souls is worth as much as that of the church. While no man has any right to be pope for any other man, he must be his own pope. "The competency of the soul" in matters of faith—that is a fine phrase, the scandal being that it is paraded in a context which usually denies what the phrase affirms. That the Bible is God's word, that it must be understood and interpreted in a certain way —this is what men have said (God never said so, for, as Emerson said, God never speaks) —perhaps a Luther, a Calvin, a Wesley, perhaps an orthodox or a liberal pastor. And it is quite true that the scholar, in scholarly questions, in questions of history, geography, grammar, linguistics, can give better judgments than he who has not studied. Still, in questions of religion, questions of the human heart and conscience, we are worth as much as scholars,

perhaps more, since the scholar fixes his eyes on a pretty limited region of life, while we can have preserved a free and wide look for the world.

And what sort of support and steadfastness is it that faith in an alien authority gives us? That of fear which does not trust itself to think; of the injurious solicitude with which an alien force greater than our own burdens us, so that we do not dare to look it in the face freely and openly. It is in religious doubt that we begin to lay aside this fear and this cramping minding of our *p*'s and *q*'s. It is in religious doubt that we begin to acquire the power of a true self-confidence. It is in religious doubt that a new kind of joy celebrates its entry into the city of Man Soul—the joy of investigating and working with one's own powers and gifts. Whoever insists on a violent halt being called to this spirit of inquiry, or resigns himself to the dictation of others, foregoes the highest innermost pleasure of the soul—the

pleasure of one's own growth and free development.

Every doubt implies a criticism of the judgment of others who have lived before us or who are living by our side. They may be mistaken, subject to error, the doubter says. And here is pain, grievous and pitiful, all the more so, the dearer and nearer the objects of the doubt be to us. To lose its pantheon, to see its pantheon become a museum, as every nation has done sooner or later, nay, as each soul does, as knowledge grows from more to more—there is no denying that this is a pitiful and terrible experience. To turn slowly away, step by step, from theologies which one has cherished, which were vital and are vital to friends past and present, to feel that these theologies are now but the skeletons of religion, this cannot be done without mental anguish. And with all his "enlightenment" there are times when the modern man must long to hear even old Triton blow his wreathed horn or for the

stately dogmatic mansion which the souls of the fathers built. Still, as a tortoise cannot dwell in the dry shell which its father shed, but must grow a shell of its own—so must we!

But the feeling between us and those that have gone before and first taught us the way—what shall we say of that? For one thing, those we love do not expect blind subjection to their will, blind loyalty to their thoughts. Even Jesus did not. They would like us to get from their life something by means of which we might see more than they did, do more than they could. Even Jesus did. That is the way of love. They who love us would not let us be slaves to what they saw and said, but be as free to see and say what is in us as they were to see and say what was in them. Indeed, they could not claim such right for themselves save from a point of view that would grant it to us.

But for another thing, who are the teachers and leaders that we most love?

Those who made us free, who taught us the duty not to stop where we are or where they are, not to swear by their words, but by our criticism, by our power of doubt, to test and purify our common spiritual possessions. Identity of opinion is a poor basis of friendship between friends. I think what Calvin thought, or Paul, you say. Very well, *you* may do so; but those great prophets and warriors of freedom, Calvin and Paul, in your place today, would not think what they thought. The eternal light in some prophet's soul finds expression in words and deeds. The prophet passes away; then you come and convert his words into creeds, his acts into rituals; you identify the dried and petrified remains of his religion with religion; and you call that honoring the prophet. Another man comes with the spirit that was in the prophet, but with other words in a different situation. The prophet whose tomb you built would hail the new seer as his brother, while

you who built the tomb of the one would stone the other.

But this false attitude toward others is aggravated by the same attitude toward ourselves. We are apt to think that *our own* doubt is the last doubt, that the reformation for which *we* have sacrificed our all is the last reformation. Every spiritual, self-achieved possession becomes a danger to our inner life, if it signifies a stand-still. Behind every truth that is won must we put a quiet interrogation point, and claim the right to come up close to it with our doubt. To be sure, everything which we have elaborated in knowledge and experience is very dear to us, since it has thus become a part of our being; our heart's blood has gone into it, and it seems a kind of suicide to turn our weapons against ourselves. To admit that what is truth to us now may be error bye and bye—that is not always an exhilarating confession to make. The more earnestly we strove for the truth we now hold, the more completely a truth has

become intergrown with the life of our soul, the deeper the gash into our own flesh, so much the more do we keep the knife of doubt away. And indeed, as I hinted a a moment ago—in our day it is important to bear this in mind—we may be in danger of duplicating in the spiritual region that self-laceration which monks and ascetics practiced upon their bodies in former ages; we may so force the excretive process that not simply dead matter but the very food itself, and living cells as well, so to speak, may be injuriously and needlessly sundered from the soul. We may be so afraid of holding error that we never hold the truth. Moreover, there is such a thing as allowing sincerity to destroy the possibility of many a fine and lovable grace which would adorn an otherwise hard and repellent spirit. I mean to say that doubt has its limitations. Just as a mother does not try to see what quantities of food she can crowd into the stomach of her child, just as the teacher does not seek to force

the greatest quantity of knowledge into the mind of the pupil, but each, mother and teacher, uses only the amount and kind of food and knowledge that will secure the growth of the personal life, so the normal process of elimination will not be concerned with breaking down cells that are sound or carrying off material that is still food. So is it with faith and doubt. As the caricature of faith is fanaticism, so the caricature of doubt is atheism, or that kind of skepticism which is the virtual negation of God. It is not meant that the God of a people or of an individual in one stage of development shall not be retired at a later stage. He probably will be. It is meant that the elimination of God and of the God-forming impulse is more than the carting away of waste material. It is an abnormal removal of food not yet assimilated, of cells not yet broken down.

But with this reserve clause in mind let me return. I was saying that we were always inclined to stop with *our* doubt as the

end of the matter. Oftentimes your modern man who has struggled loose from some old church faith, some official authority, makes a final stand, stubborn and stiff-necked, on the point which he has reached. Thus liberalism comes to have its orthodoxy too, often not less orthodox but religiously less profound and powerful than the orthodoxy which it repudiates. Speaking personally, were I called upon to choose between some of these modern Gods, between your vague, attenuated, pervasive, circumambient Shade of therapeutic beneficence, and that old warrior Jehovah, of ancient Israel, who did things, I should choose the latter every time, and shed every drop of my blood in his cause. But take some cross-sections of so-called ecclesiastical and religious free thought today, and see how the case stands. A man has conquered release from the Trinity God of the church because he can no longer endure this contradiction to his number system. He has arrived at the

One-God thought, the Father-God, after he has bidden adieu, with lighter or with heavier heart, to the Son and the Holy Ghost. And there he stops. His thought of God is finished. But what an ocean of new riddles and doubts are hidden in this "One" God! Is not God beyond our human number system, and therefore as little "one" as "three"? As a human name does he not signify a petrifaction and not a life, a concept of thought and not a feeling of the heart? But our liberal would shield himself from this deeper insight. This is too much doubt for him. This would disquiet him. Having once found repose, he will steer clear of any new profound disturbance. But it is precisely this new doubt that can bring God closer to the heart, that God who can be bound down to no number and imprisoned in no name, because he fulfils the soul with eternal infinite life.

We all know men who, often laboriously enough, have earned a faith that overcomes

the God-man of the church. The being who walked and talked with that little group of men in Galilee, who lived on earth in the form of a man, was a man, a real and true man, nothing more and nothing less, they say. Then they stop with their man Jesus. But think how many riddles and doubts are concealed in their faith in the man Jesus! To these men it is an insufferable disquietude when one points out that these riddles and doubts must be openly declared and that they shall be a stimulus and guide by which we shall all attain to new religious knowledge. We can never be satisfied with this Jesus religion as a finality. We must pass on from faith in a man to faith in a new eternal Messiah—*our* Messiah, because bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, *our* Messiah, a creation of the spirit of modern humanity, "become flesh" in all human souls, born anew in every child, in order to celebrate his resurrection of truth and love, of justice and freedom. And this Messiah will

be to us—what he really was to every people that created or adopted him—our Ideal.

We were brought up to believe in the Holy Bible, in which our fathers espied the very language of God, on which they grounded their faith. Then came our doubt. The Bible is a human book, we said, burdened with the burdens, good and bad, of all our humanity, as only a book of this kind could be. Then we stopped there. No more work on the old book for us. We did not think that our real work began precisely at the point where we stopped. Must we not go on to understand, as best we may, almost never quite certainly, the contradictions and confusions and riddles embedded in the book, layer on layer, and thereby gain some better insight into at least one page of the long history of the human heart, of human wandering, of human seeking and striving? If we simply say, "It is man's book," then rest upon our oars and do not begin again to question and criticize and doubt, then this book, living to the fathers,

will become a dead book to us. We shall cease to know the story of that folk life without which the story of our own life would be unintelligible. And after all, if God be God of human life at all, this page of the sweet sad music of humanity is also the divine language of eternity, and it does not cease to be word of God because God has other words to speak. It is a more serious question whether, under the impulsion of doubt, our modern humanity can do what Israel did—make a Bible; whether each of our lives is writing some line worthy to be read and known of all men.

In sum: True love for the spiritual possessions, which we have both inherited and acquired, is evinced in the power of doubt with which we constantly sift, test, these possessions, thereby increasing their value and their fruitfulness. And the only fixedness of the human heart is to know nothing fixed except the seeking, testing spirit of man, which, as the spirit of God, shall lead us into all truth.

3. But I must come back now from problems of our time and day to a point or two bearing upon the development of religion in history. There are two epochs of the adjustment of religion, necessary to the growth of religion, of which I must ask you to think quite specially. I have already said that it was ever the habit of man to think that God was like himself. So long as man cared primarily for the things that satisfied the body, he thought of his god from the same point of view. If the end of life among men was wine, women, and song, the end of life among the gods was the same thing. If man be a revelation of the divine, it is even more true that a man's god is a revelation of his own heart. The Hindu spirit, for example, created the Hindu gods, with their many heads, many arms, aflame with sensuality, cruelty, barbarity. Think of Siva, as an illustration, in his wild frightfulness. He was made in a workshop whose torrid atmosphere we can only imagine. Serpents over-

hang him. A chain of skulls encircle his neck. His head adornment is a lunar disc. On his forehead flames a third eye, whose glance once burned to ashes the love god that drew too near him. He is throned on a mountain summit, surrounded by hosts of spirits, his spouse by his side. He is actor, dancer. He is ascetic, the master of all the gloomy cramping violence of Indian asceticism. His knee is surrounded by a double coil of serpents. So he sits there, repressing sense and thought by inhibition of his breath, staring into vacuity, dissolving into Brahma, the All-One.

Now, of what reality is such a figure as that save as an expression of the heart that made it? In what other way can you be so sure of what a man would like to be, of what a man would choose as his satisfying portion, as you can by finding out what sort of god he has? It is self-evident that man can attribute no higher kind of moral ideas to his god or gods than those which he himself possesses, which he himself

understands and evaluates. And the main question—we often fail to keep this in mind—is *not* whether he represents the divine as one or more deities; the main thing is *the kind of spiritual worth the deity or deities stand for.*

But in the course of history a higher moral consciousness develops in stress and storm, in the fate of the human. Moral requirements are first infra-tribal. Later they are extended beyond tribal limits. Last of all conduct comes to be evaluated according to the disposition of the agent. But when men developed moral ideals in the human world they transferred these ideals to the god-world also. Thus the moralization of the gods went on. Morals were first achieved by the human, then they were carried over into the divine. Just as there would have been no god of thunder had there been no experience of thunder, so there would have been no God of holiness, love, and faithfulness, had there been no man of holiness, love, and faithfulness.

In this way the lower anthropomorphism is stripped off from the god. A deepening and inwardizing of the human is followed by a deepening and inwardizing of the divine. The gods do not dwell in temples made with hands. They no longer see and hear and move like human beings. Even outer worship, the rigid performance of rites, recedes. It is not the blood of bulls and goats, nor the remembering of sacred days to keep them holy, but a pure heart, a godly walk and conversation, for which the gods care. If a man concludes that his supreme freedom is evinced and his supreme power exhibited in triumphing over his enemy by forgiving his enemy, he will arrive at the thought of a god who sends his rain upon the evil and the good, and whose mercy endureth forever. If fatherliness becomes so great in the world of the human it cannot but be that God will be thought of as our Father which is in heaven.

Then, too, a unifying of peoples results in a unifying of the gods. Monohumanism

must precede monotheism. As the idea of the parliament of man, the federation of the world, the oneness of man and the unity of the whole world, dawns, as thus a universally valid morality arrives, our God will cease to be God of the Jews only, but will be God of the gentiles also, as Paul said.

To be sure this is only one side of the matter. The other side is, perhaps, even more important. While all our values are first human achievements, and then transferred to the world of the divine, it is also true that the values once lodged there will react into the human in a way that is indispensable to the idealizing and transfiguring of the human. Human fatherliness, for example, is transferred to the world of the gods, but on that account it reacts into the experience of our fatherhood here for its ennoblement and beauty and sacredness. So, too, monotheism once arrived at is the most powerful promoter of monohumanism of which we can possibly think. As long as each folk had its own

god it was self-evident that the god-given commandments were valid for that folk only. But when men arrive at the conviction of monotheism, lying, for example, could not be a divine prohibition within one tribal life and a divine commandment or permission in the dealings of that tribe with other tribes. Thus, wherever there has been the development of a monotheistic religion, and of a monistic thought, there has been the gradual development of a universally valid morality embracing all mankind. The identity of all human interests—man's last, best thought—thus comes to be a necessary insight. A just man injures no one, not even his enemies, Plato taught, and seems to have said something new and strange to his compatriots. Men are not divided by cities and villages and institutions, said Zeno, but they are all to be treated as citizens of one state, as members of one flock. At the outset Jewish law had purely national significance. The neighbor was not the Assyrian or the Persian but

only the member of the tribe. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy, said Jesus, but I say unto you, Love your enemy. He took the decisive and definitive step, and thus arrived at a universally valid morality. But then he said, Our Father—hence all we are brethren.

But though we have arrived at the thought of monothesim we are far from taking its moral implications with consistent seriousness. Piracy is no longer practiced toward an unarmed and defenseless foe at sea as a requirement of duty. But it is on land. Individuals may have learned their privilege to love other individuals as themselves. But nations have not. The world of business has not, and some other worlds that one might mention. Just as there is often a theoretical monotheism conjoined with a practical polytheism, so there is among us a theoretical monohumanism conjoined with a practical polyhumanism. We have yet

to learn to love men, all men, as God loves men.

Before turning from this subject, we should say something, difficult as the problem is, of the intimate union historically between morality and religion. I refer more particularly to the origin of the idea of the categorical character of morality. Moral commands are viewed as commandments of the gods or of deity. Obedience is enforced by divine punishment or reward here or hereafter. In addition to morality and right, religion also is included under the sanction of deity. Faith in God and the proper mode of worship are also commanded by him. The laws of logical thought and of artistic creation are free. They are gifts of God, of course, but he does not protect them by means of punishments. Logical error and artistic tastelessness are no sins. Manifestly, however, these functions need no special protection or sanction. A man may fall short in matters of logic and of art without ceasing to seek the

true and the beautiful or refusing to welcome them when they are shown to him. Even religion might dispense with such protection, for man is incurably religious and will find his way back to religion again after he has lost it. But of course the religion of one man is not that of another, and since it is often bound up with vested interests, one's own "true" religion will enjoy special authentication that another's does not have.

But morality, in the period of its development, seems to have acquired such authentication in a special degree. In this way it was domesticated in individuals, endowed therefor indeed, but not otherwise capable of being moralized. Morality is the creation of the garnered foresight of generations, in the face of individual resistance. At the outset, at least, it could not make headway on the basis of mere earthly authorities, but relied mainly upon authority from the invisible world. The divine will is source of the moral law, also

its sanction: therefore that law is categorically binding. Such divine reinforcement of morality would be a tremendous veto to the individual's passion and perversity, to his rebelliousness and violence.

It is not meant, let it be repeated, that earthly authorities were not valid or valuable on their own account. It is simply that, for the authority to be absolute, it had to have its seat in an absolute will. For authority to be absolute it must be religious. It would be difficult to overestimate the historical mission of this idea of an absolute authority, which was thought to be source and support and sanction of human rights and human duties, that is, of morality. On the basis of this explanation of the matter, authority was the historical power which awoke in man's heart the idea of a higher law. And it was on this authority that that higher law originally reposed.

But you know the fate of this way of looking at the problem, when criticism set in. You know of the great subject of the func-

tional importance of religion to morality; of the contention that morality is independent of religious authority. Are the two ideas, authority and moral law, necessarily and indissolubly united? Is authority one with such law? Which of these two ideas, authority and law, is the essential one? You know how these questions had to arise in an age that had grown critical. And you know what the answer is. If I bow to law because it is the expression of an authoritative will, my motives have not sprung from the content of the law itself, but are to be found in my relations to that authoritative will, regardless of the law, no matter now whether that relation be one of fear, or piety, or reverence. Therefore it is only by making a *détour* that I arrive at the recognition of the law. It follows that if that law had been declared by another will than the will by which it was declared, I might not have obeyed it. It also follows, conversely, that I would have obeyed a diametrically opposite law, had it been declared by the

same authority. Therefore, from such a point of view, it would make no difference what the content of the law was. In addition to this, man would be hampered and harassed by the difficulty that his action on which everything depends would be thrown into an arbitrary relation with his own nature. A third power would be introduced between man and man's task, and an unconditional power at that. This absolute power is sometimes spoken of as a jealous God, brooking no rivals. But even supposing that the authority was no absolute authority, still, if it be not identical with the content of the law, it obtrudes itself injuriously into that direct and intimate relation which should exist between man and his task.

Ecclesiastical ethics used to teach that we ought to love man not for man's sake but for God's sake. It follows that not love but obedience, subjection to the divine will, is the cardinal Christian virtue. It is this conception that made Christianity a "posi-

tive religion," so called. Now a positive religion is a religion that is founded on authority; and obedience is the fundamental correlate to authority. Therefore love is subordinate to obedience. Paul said that love was greater than "faith." But positive Christianity recognizes no love that is not based on "faith," faith in a supernatural authority. Paul arrived at the priceless insight that there is no difference between Greek and barbarian, bond and free. But the church put up the bars again in its dogma of a harsher difference—the difference between "believer" and "unbeliever," the "saved" and the "lost" or the "unsaved," as the euphemistic concession to the modern sense of moral primacy expresses it. Thus "faith" and love work at cross purposes, and love comes to its rights only when it transcends the limits of "faith." But this is precisely what Christianity as positive religion cannot do. It was only through the modern principle of toleration, which triumphed

in the face of the bloodiest and bitterest possible opposition on the part of the church, that the commandment of love came at last to its fruition. On the basis of love, the ecclesiastical distinction between believer and unbeliever, saved and lost, came to be treated in the same way that outer and national distinctions were ordered to be treated by Paul in the primitive brotherhoods. We have here an instance of what has usually happened in the modern world: the higher morality begins outside of the church, but to be ecclesiastically appropriated later, perhaps thereby legalized, limited, and lowered again. As a matter of history, it was Spinoza, excommunicated Jew, who first in the modern world drew the practical conclusions from the commandment of love, and brought back from the dead the old eternal truth that love is greater than "faith."

But do you urge that I have stood the pyramid on its apex, that I have appre-

hended authority as purely arbitrary authority? "Of course," so you might say, "we hold that the good is good because it is the will of God; but since the good is identical with the will of God, God wills only what is good, and therefore the content of the law does not depend upon caprice and chance." Then there are three considerations to which were you to give much patient thought, it would make an epoch in your life. In the first place, what reason have you to arrogate to yourself so unerring an insight into the essence of deity as to know the motives that determine the divine will? Have we been admitted into the secret counsels of the Almighty? In the second place, even assuming that you know what those motives are, *and that you know that they are right*, why go around Robin Hood's barn, why appeal to a supernatural will, instead of bringing the motive directly to bear upon the thing in hand? If, for example, you say that the God in whom you believe is just, you must have

already attributed a value to justice, a value that man has discovered in the course of the struggle for life. How do you know that God's motives are right, unless you antecedently know, or think that you know, what the right is? Your alternative is an arbitrary might that makes right, or a right by which might is determined. You have seen the logical fate of the former; the above remark points to the truth of the latter. As Höffding says:

> If God wills the good because it is good, there must be some criterion of good and evil which is independent of the divine will, and men must be able to discover this criterion, since without it they could not know that that which God wills is good. And if the good is good because God wills it, then must men ask themselves why they call that which God wills "good," instead of merely saying, God wills what he will. Religious faith, when it has become clear as to its own nature and has attained its zenith, assumes an independent human ethic, which has, as a matter of fact, developed historically under the practical influence of the ethical feeling of man.[1]

[1] *Philosophy of Religion*, p. 328; German ed., p. 296.

In the third place, then, as soon as an authority ceases to coerce you by the might of force, that authority, however "religious" or "absolute," cannot escape giving an account of itself before our human judgment thrones. And do you not see that such an accounting presupposes *an authority over this authority*, according to which the latter must be evaluated?

To be sure, an experiment has been made of a fourth possibility. An absolute authority is on that account above proof, criticism, substantiation. Therefore it must be miraculously revealed, and thus known to be absolute by this mode of its origin. The order of nature is disrupted at the point where the ethical begins. Here there is a breach of continuity. Such was the position of the old theology. But it confounded the inexplicable with the miraculous. Miracle has ever been an *asylum ignorantiae* to which theology fled for refuge from the wrath of man. It sticks a miracle in every gap that scientific knowl-

edge has not yet filled up. Ever to seek a home in the ever-closing gaps of scientific knowledge is to eke out a precarious livelihood indeed. Scientific ethics, as opposed to theological ethics, does not pretend to solve all riddles. It follows the path of the human and the natural as far as it can, then stops. But science allows no breach of continuity. The life of the spirit is continuous with the infinite life of nature and emerges from nature at a certain stage of development. From this continuity it must not be inferred that our spiritual states, our thoughts and feelings, are of any less sublime a character than they would be were they causelessly introduced from one knows not where at hypothetical points of discontinuity. To the ancients the movements of the heavenly bodies were divine and ideal, and it was considered blasphemy when men began to give a natural explanation of those motions. We are now in the midst of an experience in the region of psychology and ethics, which the astrono-

mer has happily behind him. But our experience will soon be a matter of history, too. Faith, worship, love will find their psychological and historical explanation, as indeed the more elementary phenomena of consciousness have already found theirs.

It is the task of this historical science to delineate the origin and development of our authorities. These authorities have evolved according to definite laws—even "absolute" or "religious" authorities over our moral obediences have done so. But what is above all authorities, what comprehends all authorities —this is the great concern—is the vast historical evolution itself. And as fast as the conditions in which an authority was once valid cease to exist, that authority passes away. It is not simply "our little systems," it is our most venerable architectonic systems of *divine* authority as well, that "have their day and cease to be." But they do not cease to be without a fight. But the fight proves that they are not absolute but relative, not divine but

human, not infinite but finite. The gods of Olympus, who descended upon earth's battlefields, were wounded by men.

I think now I have said enough to suggest the conclusion at which one who pursues this line of thought must sooner or later arrive. That conclusion is, on the one hand, the great importance of religious authority for the moral life, on the other, the relativity and impermanence of all our authorities. The principle of authority as such is not the complete basis of the ethical. The fact is that authorities are the pedagogic forces in the history of the human race. But when you educate anyone you aim to make him free, to bring him to stand on his own feet and to see with his own eyes. You strive therefore to make yourself superfluous to him, to decrease that your pupil may increase. It is this resignation that is required of every teacher, but it is only too easily and too often forgotten by authorities in every region of life. The authority that forgets this proves in this

way, if in no other, its finitude. It is so often true that the difference between the authority which is ancillary to morality and the morality itself is that the authority is egoistic and wilful at the expense of the very cause it would promote. History shows us how true this has ever been in the case of ecclesiastical authority. And this is quite in agreement with the fact which I had to point out a few moments ago, that in the last resort authority appealed to an egoistic motive, namely, fear. Authority is ethically justified only as the bearer of a content which has a right to be apart from the authority. Only so can authority become an object of admiration, reverence, and love; otherwise it sinks back into its most primitive form. So long as an authority, as a *tertium quid*, stands between the agent and the law and end of his conduct, so long is the conduct only indirectly ethical, because other motives obtain than the recognition and reverence of the law. Therefore ethics degrades all authorities

from the absolute to the relative, from ends to means. Like the sabbath of which Jesus spoke, authority is for man and not man for authority. The thing that is inalienable to man is his freedom. Freedom needs no justification; the burden of proof is upon him who would restrict freedom. And this means—let no fear of caricature and perversion cause us to flinch here—that authority is made for freedom and not freedom for authority. As personality matures, it finds its authority within, compared with which all outer compulsion is as nothing. It has been the heroic task of recent times, even in our free and democratic land, to convert absolute authorities into relative. Life began to suffer under the burden of the precepts of a supernatural authority with its scrupulosity instead of conscientiousness, and hence modern times have toiled to usher in a freer and higher development which would know how to distinguish between the important and the unimportant, the essential and the

accidental. The battle began centuries ago with renaissance and reformation and revolution, each in its own way. We must arrive at the insight that the validity and worth of ethical ideas repose upon the ideas themselves, upon their inner connection with the nature and conditions of human life. Those who today are working to transform absolute authorities into relative authorities are serving the interests of morality. Men's minds must be disabused of the prejudice that ethical ideas are so intimately connected with belief in an absolute authority that an attack upon the latter is an attack upon the former. The current reproach that free inquiry leads to immoral consequences is fast becoming insincere and reactionary. According to Gibbon, in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, the pagans in Alexandria expected to see heaven and earth relapse into primeval chaos when the Christians overturned the statue of Serapis. So many today seem to think that human life will relapse into

moral chaos if ancient religious dogmas are denied their regulative supremacy. It were wiser to commit ourselves to the progress of historical development and trust that development to harmonize new ideas with the necessary practical forms of life.[1] This, moreover, is the truly religious thing to do. God fulfils himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world. Time makes ancient good uncouth.

[1] At the last meeting of the Congress of Liberal Religions, the Roman Catholic Abbé Houtin closed a powerful and pathetic address as follows:

"Confronting the papacy are no longer the humble, respectful, timid men of former times. The new generation is, above all, logic and fond sincerity. In response to the refusal of the papacy we hear today in France the outcry of the modern spirit: 'The church does not admit that she is mistaken, she does not retreat from a false position. To those who demonstrate her in error she responds with an anathema. Rather than extend a hand to Justice she embraces Fatality. For this no mercy will be shown her, and she will drink to the brim the chalice of her stupidities and her adulteries.'

"O sons and heritors of the Reformers of the sixteenth century! You see beginning in this Church of Rome, which condemned your fathers without listening to them, you see beginning, I repeat, a religious struggle better informed and more radical than that of Wickliffe, of John Huss, of

In our modern world our religious faith must be transferred from tradition to the life that made the tradition, as from an herbarium to springtime, as from hardened lava to the mountain of fire; from authorities, which ever have their day and cease to be, to the creator, human and divine, which made and ever makes anew the authorities—that eternal creative spirit which is immanent and constant in all

Luther, and of Calvin. Great is the sorrow and distress of us who see crashing down upon us the ancient and venerable dome under which we had believed we might safely remain. For you, who have never considered Rome as the whole church and have held her action to be often only a tyrannical oppression, for you there is nothing surprising in our destruction, our sufferings, and the struggles which we must encounter. Your fathers and you, even you, have known the same vicissitudes, and in the sweat of your brow and the tears of your heart have reconstructed for yourselves religious shelters where you live in peace and full of energy for the service of God and of humanity. In our present anguish your experience remains our encouragement and our hope."—Address on "The Crisis in the Catholic Church," in *Freedom and Fellowship in Religion* (Proceedings and Papers of the Fourth International Congress of Religious Liberals, held at Boston, September 22–27, 1907; pp. 238, 239).

historical personality and progress. Our trust must be in this Life and this Spirit, not in some particular deposit thereof, as the true religious basis of ethics. That basis will then be seen to be inspirational rather than regulative, dynamic rather than static, creative and nourishing rather than statutory and repressive. But such a basis is indeed necessary. The conviction that the whole of which we are a part shares with us in ideal-achieving capacity gives indispensable courage and comfort for our moral vocation, even as Paul said, if God be for us, who can be against us? Or, as Höffding puts it, faith in the conservation of values is in principle the basis of our production and discovery of values.[1]

4. We have been in the thick of a serious and difficult subject, and I fear to tell you that I must go on to one that is even more so. But I shall be brief. You remember

[1] See my article, "Concerning the Religious Basis of Ethics," in the *American Journal of Theology*, Vol. XII, No. 2 (April, 1908), pp. 211–30, a subject upon which I am preparing a companion volume to this one.

I said that there were two epochs which profoundly affected the form and content of religion. The one, connected with the problem of morality, I have just considered; the other, with which I have to do now, is the part played by the enlargement and change of our knowledge in the formation of religion, both as to the structure and as to the function of religion. Time was when the behavior of things, inwardly and outwardly, was thought to be entirely dependent upon their guidance by manlike beings. This was true for reality, individually and collectively. But men gradually observed that things were very far from being subjected to caprice and arbitrariness. Observations of their own conduct pointed in a different direction. In an ever-widening region man came to know that the behavior of things was uniform, according to laws; and through his knowledge of these laws his own control of things was facilitated. Bye and bye bold pioneers of thought arose who declared that what

was thus true in the small region of experience was true without exception; true, moreover, not only for material processes, but for psychic processes as well. Speaking briefly, once the character of the behavior of reality was thought to be determined from without, now it is seen to be determined from within; once the law was supplied to reality from an alien source, now it is a self-legislation of reality at which reflection has arrived; once changes, especially world-historical changes, were due to the encroachments of an alien will, now reality is self-changing, self-directing, and its order is punctured at no point with a view to correction or improvement of which new emergencies may be in need. Moreover, the force by which things were moved was once looked upon as external, now it is held to be internal. Again, to a former mode of thought present existence was empty of immediate value. It was a vale of tears down which we walked in order that we might reach the bridge of sunset over

into a better world and a better day. Time was vain and valueless, eternity alone was the home of values. But a great change has taken place: values are here, whether they are hereafter or not; and they are here, not as a donation of miraculous supernaturalism, but as an achievement of the human as we till life's thorny fields. Eternity is not duration before time or after time or concurrent with time. Eternity is the persistence of our values amid the mutations and illusions of the temporal and the changing. Like everything else, our values have come to be; indeed, the only thing that has not come to be is coming-to-be itself, and the only thing that does not change is change. It is this last item in the reckoning that is most revolutionary. According to church doctrine, the path of the universe was a descent from original perfection to imperfection; according to modern thought, it is an ascent from imperfection to perfection. According to church doctrine, the path of the human race was downward

from angel to devil; according to modern thought it is upward from anthropoid and cannibal to civilization and culture. We are not fallen angels but developed animals; and history is no process of deterioration but an ascending ladder of perfectibility—a pyramid of higher ends and self-realizing values. Once there was thought to be at the outset a fixed and finished and perfect plan of all that has taken place or shall take place. Once Perfect Reason was put at the threshold of the world process, and the irrational, the capricious, the imperfect came in as chance and exception. Men incline to the reverse of this proposition today. From an original Unreason, or Unconscious, or blind world-will, harmony and beauty, rhythm and melody, order and uniformity, have slowly and steadily evolved. Accordingly, there has been not simply an evolution of reality in its content, but there has been also an evolution of the plan of reality as well. As our human experiences are not perfect at the beginning

of the human, so the plan of the whole was not perfect at the outset, but grows with the growth of those agencies by which it is realized. Meaning of fact and fact are not temporal sequence, so that one must be before the other. The most that can be asserted is the logical priority of plan, and this plan, as I have said, is not supplied from alien agencies to the processes and products of what is. It is rather immanent and constant and growing. In a word, the cosmos is self-originating, so far as it may be spoken of as originating at all, self-law-giving, self-directing, self-criticizing, self-end.

Now is the ground cut from under religion by this view? I do not think so. For one thing, there is our thought of God. That men copy their own selves into their gods has been, as I have said, a commonplace, ever since Xenophanes, even. We project our microcosm into the macrocosm. By what the Germans call *Einfühlen*, or *Introjizieren*, or *Einlegen*, we transfer our

properties or attributes into the All. On this point there are not two different opinions among thinkers of the first order. But what part of our existence shall we project in a duplicating way into the All? Our muscular system or our nervous system? our gross bony system or our fine central nervous system? our body or our soul? our mechanism and chemism or our spiritual functions? The body which develops according to mechanical and causal laws, says the materialist. Both, body and soul, says the dualist. The spirit, which acts from the point of view of ends and means, says the idealist. Now, judging from the history of thought, there has never been such a decisive victory of any of these hypotheses as to involve the other two in a definitive rout. Religion supports the last hypothesis. In the absence of universally valid logical refutation of the other two, we may raise the question as to which is practically most effective. Is it a fact that the conviction that ours is a world of

purposive activity would steel our wills for endeavor, and cheer and console our hearts in those terrible experiences which would otherwise deaden our feelings and paralyze our energies? Then the *need* of such a conviction is our warrant for cherishing such a conviction. And at bottom it is a question, not of logic, but of whether we have the *courage* and *venturesomeness* to do so in the face of so much apparent meaninglessness and cruelty. But suppose we do import our spirit into the All, we are to bear in mind that it belongs to the very nature of spirit to grow, to be self-creative. Therefore we cannot well escape conceiving of God as "becoming" and not "being." We may not import some cross-section of our spirit into Existence, thus forming the thought of a divine life that is static and monotonous, that is not life at all, but eternal death. It belongs to the very nature of the "absolute" to grow. Let no one be agitated unduly by this idea. It is simply the modern way of stating what

is after all about the only survival of scholastic theology in our new world: *deus causa sui*—the doctrine of the aseity of God. Still I do not wish to seem to deny that the sum of what I have just been urging amounts to the profoundest change of thought known to history. The God of the old religion, whom modern science at first expelled completely from the universe, allowing him no other function than the inactive contemplation of how it goes, has now been drawn completely within the universe, not as "free will," active and interactive within the cosmos, but as the meaning and value side of that whole whose fact side it is the business of science to understand. Now, man is transferring the values for which he lives and for which he is willing to do—those values which it is the human vocation as such to achieve, not into an external deity, to be static and stagnant there, but into the cosmic whole of which he himself is so small a part. Nay, he is not transferring those values as ready-

made and finished into the cosmic whole, even; he is finding out that he must be content and that he may be content with the conviction that the cosmic whole is such that these values are by him achievable.

The cosmic whole of which he is so small a part! It gives one pause to reflect that the whole race of us men, from the beginning until now, living and dead, probably could be comfortably congregated in the state of New York; that we may be but an episode, the whole posse of us, in the transitory life of an insignificant planet; that this total humanization of Existence may be an audacious and unwarrantable procedure. Do you never ask, Is Existence as a whole interpretable in terms of the human? Is the concern of the whole centrally and permanently the production of those kinds of values that satisfy the human? It would seem that we do not know. It would even seem that there is no way by which we can find out. Man is but a single line in the long cosmic story,

and we may not be sure that we know the point of the whole vast story from a single line of it. What do we *know* of spiritual values extraneous to human experience? When we interpret the cosmos in terms of ourselves, is it compliment or insult to the cosmos? It may be that the everlasting on-going cosmic process shall in ages to come leave man and man's kind of values as far behind as man has distanced the ichthyosaurus of geologic history. And cosmic experience lends some color to such an assumption. But then it may be that Professor Ostwald is right with his "impression" that energy will outlast everything else in the universe. It is but a little while since scientists were debating as to whether the end of all would be ice or ashes. What shall we do? What shall we do? We have no way of knowing whether existence is such as to achieve values save from the fact that values, as we count values, have been achieved. The race of man would never have known

that water would quench thirst had not thirst been quenched by water, as a fact of experience. What is water? Two parts hydrogen, one part oxygen, we say. But what is hydrogen, and what is oxygen, and so on? So you push me back quickly to a point where I do not know what water is; much less do I know what the cosmos in its totality is. It would seem that we are shut up to ontological agnosticism. But what man needs most of all is not a science of the essence of things; it is a system of the values of things. And as I have repeatedly said, religion is the conviction that cosmic existence is such that man is an ideal-achieving being, and that the achievement of his ideals is possible. Or, religion is the conviction of the achievability of universally valid satisfactions of the human will. Such a conviction may be cherished as a *faith* by him who has the courage to do so, and it does not appear that science can dislodge him from that position. After all, the seeming triviality of man, painful

problem as it is, need not stampede us. The worth of man is not determined by the size of the house he lives in. Bigness is not the criterion of value. It is not the size of the stage, but the play that is enacted there, that is the main thing. Gettysburg was unknown to the world until the battle was fought there, in which rebellion and slavery were shot to death by the million guns of the republic. And thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth who is to rule my people Israel. Is Jesus to be valued in terms of the little town of Nazareth? And may we not share his conviction—so great is man —"What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Is not our optimistic faith vindicated by the high endeavor it warrants? Besides, how could a Purposive Activity which produced the humanly good and true and beautiful allow itself to recede from such achievements? And if it trans-

cends them and leaves them behind—have you never heard that you ought to be willing to be damned for the glory of God? Thus do the new science and the old faith get together at one point, at least.

But what of prayer? A little while ago I was stating roughly the modern view of the world, according to which the values for which we care may be inwardly achieved but not outwardly donated. We may conceive the structure and function of the universe to be such that we can do for ourselves what was formerly supposed to have been done for us by a God on the outside of the universe. Must we hold that if Deity cannot arbitrarily encroach into things and into the hearts of men there is no help or hope for us? Does it follow that if the insight be sustained that the formula God plus the world is tantamount to the formula God plus God we shall have to assume a cosmos which, if unitary, is vain and valueless? I do not think so. Religion, which in the past has been capable of so many adjust-

ments, is now in process of readapting itself in the interests of its harmony with the newer and larger knowledge. After all, what is our theism but a sort of polytheism with the number of gods reduced to but one? Would we cease to pray? Again, what right have we to pray that events should occur if at the same time we are unwilling to assume responsibility for the consequences which would follow those events to the end of time? For what consequences of prayer should we be willing to be responsible save our petitions for an inner world of truth and beauty and goodness, for the holy and eternal, for ourselves and for our kind? But in the nature of the case such an inner world cannot be ours save as an achievement of our own efficiency—cannot be ours as a donation by some alien power. So the only prayer we have a moral right to pray is precisely the prayer which after all we ourselves must answer. The function of prayer comes to be the filling of us with hope and con-

fidence and courage, so that we may do in our own strength what men so often idly entrusted to the gifts or to the activities of some god-spirit apart from life.

Again, there are the predictions of a past religion. In our new world all that must be relegated to the clairvoyant, the astrologer, the card-reader, perhaps the spiritualist; and the real predictions on which life can depend become the task of the man of science, but in a different sense from that which obtained formerly. And as to the magic of the old religion, by which the forces of nature and of human nature were controlled and utilized, it is now clear that modern technique must take its place. By science and technique men are conquering the powers that be and making them ministrant to the comfort and culture and career of the human. Magic still survives in the sacraments of religion, but a growing science is purging human consciousness, and as fast as this is done the moral miracle of regeneration and sanctification, which

was once supposed to be effected by the sacraments, will be compassed by the slower and saner processes of growth and maturity, under the influence of the life of the family, of the school, and of society. The power now supposed to be lodged in supernatural materialism will be found in the inner development of the individual and of the race.

You may now look back into history for light on the subject. There were Martin Luther and Spinoza. Think of the religion of Luther, who threw his meal bag at the door and said to his Lord God, "There it is; you know it is empty; you set me to running the Reformation, and you will have to attend to the meal bag;" Martin Luther, who said to his Lord God that Melancthon was sick, and it looked as if he was going to die, and that the Reformation could not be run without Melancthon, and that if the Lord God ever wanted his servant, Martin Luther, to pin his faith to him again, he had better get Melancthon well; Martin

Luther, who berated the devil in the billingsgate of the peasants of his time, who even threw his inkstand at the devil and hit, not the devil, but the wall at the other side; Martin Luther, who thought his individual God apart from things. And think of Spinoza, who contemplated the locked-up and legal system of things, and did so with intellectual love resulting in inner repose. In his own way, each sought and found the same thing, that which is common to all religion: protection from the mysterious unknown and from the menace of the overpowering. Each found rest for the restless heart. Each found that equilibration of the elements within and the powers without which is at once the soul's supreme need and the soul's supreme achievement, because not simply are the values a creation of the human but the very unity of values is also such a creation, and costs us toil no less than does science or art or industry. Has religion, then, an intellectual function? Yes, for the world-

view, of which I have been speaking, is in part a fruit of the intellect. Has religion an emotional function? Yes. It purifies and tempers the feelings, and the values in which we are interested will be all the finer on this account. Finally, has religion a volitional function? Still, yes. For the world of satisfactions which the human personality requires is no easy gift to us, but must be earned by us. In sum, as I said, religion is the conviction of the achievability of universally valid satisfactions of the human personality.

V

Let me now take up one or two matters of quite a different character, and then I shall hasten to close. What is the place or function of the "Founder" or the Great Man in a religion? For our purpose the question may be narrowed to an inquiry into the place of Jesus in the religion of the modern man.

1. Scientific theology, together with the spirit and thought of our new age in general, has succeeded in undermining the ecclesiastical dogma of the trinity and of the deity of Christ. Still the watchword arose, "Christianity is Christ." This watchword can be understood only in the light of its history. In Reformation days the doctrines of the Protestants deviated, of course, in many points, from those of the Catholics. Both held that their doctrines were "Christian." Hence controversy arose as to which of the two confessions had the better

claim to this designation. Appeal was of necessity made to history, whereupon it was evident that the Catholics had an undeniable advantage. Their interpretation of history did not need to leap over many centuries: they could return step by step, year by year, to the primitive period of Christianity, and indicate that each subsequent age stood upon the shoulders of the antecedent age, that every new formation and construction signified only a special unfolding and development of what had gone before.

But Protestants could not do this. If they appealed to history, they had to make a selection of the history to which they should appeal. That touched a sore spot; but they had to do it. They had to drive a stake fixing the point from which genuine and true Christianity was no longer to be found in the stream of historical life. Then arose that great, grievous embarrassment of Protestant theology: the question as to where the stake was to be driven! Where

was the line to be drawn, according to which genuine Christianity was to be distinguished from false? According to the Augsburg Confession, the ecclesiastical doctrines of the first three centuries down to the Nicene Council were the unassailable foundation of genuine Christian faith. A little later, under the influence of George Calixtus, and in order to soften the harshness of the opposition to Catholicism, the date was changed to the fifth century. But the plan did not work very well. Soon the lines began to be drawn closer and closer. Protestants made up their minds that genuine Christianity had not lasted five centuries, nor yet three; but by straining a point they held on to the first century—the apostolic age, so-called primitive Christianity. Then, at last, matters grew more serious still. It was seen that this stretch of time was still too much. Protestantism split in two. One party declared that the entire New Testament mediated original Christianity to them, and therefore fur-

nished the criterion of genuine and true Christianity. They called this "biblical" Christianity. And this they preached; on this they would build their church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against her. The other party discovered that the germs of all the things which a good Protestant was under obligation to consider as Roman Catholic, therefore as false Christianity, were contained in a series of biblical writings, especially in the Pauline epistles. Back they go again! Genuine Christianity is to be found in all its purity, not in the epistles, but only in the gospels. Then John was suspected of Catholic leanings. The Fourth Gospel was excluded from the documents of "pure" Christianity, and retreat was beaten to the first three, the so-called Synoptics. But even these were too much, because these three gospels contained much which was afterward developed into the Catholic church. What was to be done? Back of the gospels, to the gospel underlying them, was the cry.

The really "true," the "original" Christianity, is to be sought behind these gospels, it was said. To be sure, *this* Christianity no theologian's eye has ever seen and no theologian's ear has ever heard; nevertheless it was said to contain the pure, unfalsified gospel, precisely the gospel which we today still need, on which we today ought, as a duty of conscience, still to build our religious and moral life. For *this* gospel comes from Jesus—from Jesus, of whom the scholars only really know that he was not what he was said to have been by the writers of the Bible, that he did not say and do what the gospels narrate that he said and did; from Jesus, of whom we honestly know very little, almost nothing with indubitable certainty; from Jesus, who, as a child of his people and of his time, thought and believed and said much which we today cannot truthfully think and believe and say; from Jesus, who, however, has a hidden point somewhere in his heart (it is the old problem of the seat of the soul

over again) where true Christianity has its seat. But this point is problematically known only to the scholar, and the *people* are shut up to a new Catholicism in which the scholar is the pope—a Catholicism less *religious* to the heart, and more *uncertain* to the intellect, than the papacy itself. This is why hosts of our bright young men and women are flocking into the Catholic church today.

But is all this tragedy or comedy? I shall treat it as a process of human history which it is my business to understand and interpret—interpret to that class only for which, according to my preface, this book is written. I shall assume that an historical development which has been going on for four hundred years is some expression of the divine purpose and has some good in it. Still, we are in the midst of a crisis greater than any which the church has experienced before. Men's feet are slipping, and we may ask, What shall we do?

In the first place, since we know so

little about Jesus, let us assume that we know nothing with indubitable certainty. For the sake of the argument, let us assume that Jesus never lived at all. I think that he did live. I agree with a distinguished colleague of mine (who has a far better right to a scientific judgment upon the point than I have) that the denial that Jesus ever lived amounts almost to historical insanity. Still, since we may not violently reject the outcome of the historical development as sketched above, we may as well consider what our fate would be should science yet go on to doubt the historical existence of Jesus. I do not mean to deny that during the last decade doubt as to the reliability of our sources has reached an extreme at which the once sporadic opinion that Jesus was an imaginary person may boast an ever-increasing number of advocates.[1] There has been a succession of writers in Germany, Holland, England, and

[1] See *Protestantische Monatshefte*, 10. Jahrgang, Heft 7, pp. 259 ff.

America, who have thus denied all historicity to Jesus. Recently even Titius has written as follows:

> I blame no one if he is not able to share this judgment concerning the religious uniqueness of Jesus, but sees therein merely a survival of the old miracle faith. I am not at all surprised that this *enthusiastic* [italics mine] judgment is not every man's affair. On the contrary, often as I think about this matter, as I often indeed do, I am filled with astonishment that there are still thoughtful and critically endowed men who have the *courage* [italics mine] to hold fast to this enthusiasm . . . . and that I find myself under the necessity of showing the same faith.[1]

Here is a point for those who are betrayed into the attempt to found religion on historical criticism. When appeal is made to the judgment of historical science and not to the judgment of religious enthusiasm, Jesus loses his place in the religion of the Christian. He is sacrificed to skepticism. In this conclusion, Titius is without doubt right. Only recently such men as Johannes

[1] See *Der Bremer Radicalismus*, Tübingen, 1908.

Müller and Rade have made the same admission. Men who have thought long and deeply upon this subject now see that it is at once unreligious and disastrous to found our faith upon the conclusions of historical science concerning Jesus. Therefore I feel the need all the more to see how the case shall stand with reference to my world of values from the point of view that to science the non-existence of Jesus is a possibility.

Will an appeal to Christian experience convict me of error when I say that the historical-science proof of the historicity of Jesus supplies little certainty, nourishment, or enthusiasm to the religious life of Christians? Why is this? It is not simply that the argument lacks cogency, though this is true for a certain type of mind, as well as for those whose habits of thought lead them to exact a kind of evidence which historical science is not competent to adduce. The all-important reason is, first, that the side of the human consciousness

which aggregates historical data and enacts the historical judgment is not the basic bearer of the *religious* content at all; and, secondly, that the *object* to which the religious yearning of man is directed, and by it is satisfied as its everlasting portion, is not the historic fact that a man by the name of Jesus once lived upon the earth, but a *system of values*. While these values have emerged in the historical order, yet that they emerged at this date or at that, in this person or in that, is a consideration—interesting enough to a genetic science, indeed—with which religion as such has nothing whatever to do. No fact of history which is known to us only through tradition is the basis of saving faith. The reason of this is, first, that we cannot be sure that such fact, no matter what it is, may not be corroded by critical doubt some time in the great future; and, secondly, especially, that the correlate of faith is *value* and not *fact*. To say this is but to repeat my fundamental contention

that, whatever it may or may not be, the historical is not the *ultimate* basis of religion. Strictly speaking, it is not the historical as such, it is the *eternal* in the historical, and nothing but the eternal, that the religious nature of man craves. Furthermore, the pathway into the eternal is moral obedience and not historical criticism, is doing the will of God, and is not testing the credibility of tradition from out a hoary past. To determine whether a man by the name of Jesus lived for a few years and taught for a few months in Palestine many centuries ago, one must travel the *scientific* path. It is a long and difficult journey, for which few have the time and fewer still the ability. The indispensable equipment for this journey is not a pure heart, but a knowledge of Latin and of Greek, of textual and historical criticism, of the nature and laws of evidence, and the like. "We must call in the most strenuous science we can command!" says Neumann. Yes, yes; and once again,

in our new time, we shall witness the fallacy and anachronism of salvation by knowledge, by learning, common to orthodoxy, to the historical-science school of theology, and to Buddhism. Or must we substitute a new blind faith in science by the Protestant layman for the old blind faith in the church on the part of the Catholic layman? "What do you believe?" asked Luther of the charcoal man. "I believe what the church believes," answered the man. "And what does the church believe?" continued Luther. "I don't know, sir," was the reply. Is the layman of today to be like the charcoal man, only that "historical science" is substituted for "the church?" Or must one be a "successful" historian in order to be a first-hand Christian? This is the "gospel of success" with a vengeance—none the less so because the success in question is scientific. Why not say that one must achieve artistic success, and hew a statue or paint a picture, or inventive success, and contrive a machine, or com-

mercial success, and get rich in dollars, instead of in "facts?"[1] You might as well say that as to say that one must compass a certain scientific task in order to be a child of the God of the gospels. No, the difficulty which blocks our way in accepting the gospel is not our scientific inability: it is our *moral* inability, it is our inner moral antipathy to the message. And this is so because the world of religion is not one of scientific facts and knowledge, but of activities, values, and appreciations. The Christianizing of a man consists in gathering his life up and organizing it into the Christian system of activities and values and ends, and not in delving into the debatable depths of the historicity of Jesus.

While as historians, therefore, we raise the question, Did Jesus ever live? as

[1] To get rich in dollars might be easier. There is a deadly infraction of the ethics of the intellect in the easy and slovenly way in which some apologists speak of many items of tradition as fact. A fact to you is that which you cannot deny.

apologists we face a very different question. The *apologetic* question runs as follows: What difference does it now make whether Jesus ever lived or not? Historical science is not apologetics, much as at times it arrogates to itself apologetic prerogatives, thereby corrupting its own self and confusing and jeopardizing the serious issues which are at stake. Historical science is concerned with fact, apologetics with truth; the former with description and explanation, the latter with valuation and propagandism. The difference between the two is the difference between psychology, on the one hand, and ethics, or aesthetics or logic, on the other. Psychology is not concerned with values as such, be they the true or the beautiful or the good, while those other sciences are concerned with nothing but values. So is it with historical science and apologetics.

Still, in the point at issue historical science has rendered a service to apologetics. Since it has converted Jesus into *problem*,

to be and to remain problem, apologetics must take strategic advantage of the situation, and distinguish more sharply than ever before between the essentials and the accidents of our religion. If, in the nature of the case, historical science cannot cut the nerve of religious certitude, then the historic belief that Jesus existed is not a necessary article of our religion. Supposing that Jesus lived, and was what the gospels portray, did he think that it was necessary? Did Paul think that it was?[1] Would the reader let go his hold upon the grace of God, the worth of life, the love for neighbor and enemy, if science were to rob him of the Jesus of history? If one knows that the pure in heart shall see God, only because Jesus said so, does one really know it at all? May not one affirm that Jesus lived, and yet oneself not be well-pleasing to God, and may not one deny that Jesus lived, and yet be

[1] That he did not consistently think so may be inferred from his use of Abraham's faith in Galatians.

well-pleasing to God? Then the essential thing is neither the affirmation nor the denial, but something else. Are those scholars, Swiss, German, Dutch, English, who, try hard as they may, cannot make out a clear case for the historicity of Jesus, excluded from participation in the values of the gospel? No; God is good, and salvation is by grace. To hold that belief in the existence of Jesus is an inalienable constituent of our religion is to adopt a position which, from the standpoints of Jesus and of Paul themselves, is in principle subversive of religious faith. Indeed, whether one sees or not that his innermost religious possession would suffer no vital injury were historic science to force one to the position that Jesus never lived, may very well be a touchstone of the maturity of one's religious conviction. Of course I grant that essential values were brought into the world by Jesus, yet, once here, those values are self-evidential and self-propagating, and may be possessed by him

who does not possess the certainty of the existence of Jesus, even as one may have his thirst quenched by water without knowing from what fountain the cup is borne. The piety which has long been a man's possession may not be lost again because he no longer consciously derives it from Jesus, much as he might feel, with Schmiedel, that it was a most painful privation not to be able to look back and to look up to him as a real man. But water will quench thirst even if it be gathered from the common drops which rain down from dull skies, as well as if it bubbled from some mysterious fountain in the wonderland of the world. I myself believe that "historical progress cannot be explained by forces originating in a collective way, but by eminent leaders, or heroes;"[1] but others seek to derive all from the *milieu*, the environing circumstances; and I have to admit that even the man who calls into being a new spirit of the age—*Zeitgeist*—is

[1] See *Finality of the Christian Religion*, Vol. I, p. 270.

himself, in a sense, the child of his age. What I should like to urge is that the school of the *milieu*, which opposes me, is not of necessity irreligious, since my own position requires me joyfully to believe that *milieu*, made up as it is of history and of nature, in the largest sense of these words, is not empty of that God who is no respecter of persons. I may not deny creative revelation to *milieu* any more than I may deny the properties of water to raindrops in my preference for fountains, for in all things there is the secret echo of the reality of God; nor do I see that the *milieu* school is compelled to deny that that which constitutes the secret of personality is the greatest, the ultimately decisive thing. And as to the case in hand, the main thing is the possession of this secret rather than historic certainty as to the biographical facts concerning Jesus.

But it is not simply the exigencies of science and the nature of the case, it is the possibilities of the great future of the race

itself, that point us to this stronghold of an impregnable apologetics. A billion years hence the spiritual condition of the race may be conceivably as far above ours as ours is above the status of the savages that roamed the primeval forests. The civilizations of Greece and Rome and Palestine may have become quite as prehistoric as the long human story which lies behind Egypt and Babylon. The Sea of Galilee may have become table-land and Mount Zion ocean bed. The familiar stars, even, which burn in the beauty of the blue above us, may have crumbled back into cosmic dust, and others may be shining in their place. As to the heroes and geniuses who have made the epochs of our past, they may have been swallowed up in oblivion or be guessed about from names and dates on weather-worn monuments and manuscripts. And Jesus of Nazareth? Is it inconceivable that a billion years or so hence the human beings then alive will know as little about him and our specific form of religion as we

know about the religion of the dwellers in Atlantis, or any other submerged land? Is it inconceivable that the very name of Christianity shall have passed away? And yet may not the world be more Christian then than now, have more faith, hope, and love, be more sure of the fatherly God, of a brotherly man, of an eternal life, of a purposeful world? May not the stream of spiritual influence continue to deepen and widen, even though the springs of Judah be forgotten? And as, according to John, it was once necessary that Jesus should go away individually that the Spirit might come, is it inconceivable that it might be necessary for him to pass away historically, to that same end? I do not say that it will be so: the future is hidden from our eyes. I only say that it may be so. I only wish to be able to face the possibility unafraid—and possibility it surely is, since even now we may not see in Jesus an absolutely perfect model without jeopardizing the freedom and the progress of humanity. One

should know, as Schmiedel has said, that Jesus was a man, and that if the unknown future shall bring us fuller life, this too will be the gift of the grace of God. In short, whatever be the fate of the individual Jesus from the science of the present, or from the life of the future, no man is justified on that account in making shipwreck of his faith in the preciousness and permanence of our values: faith in a Father in heaven and in the filial and fraternal disposition here upon the earth.

In sum: we experience what Paul experienced. At the moment when we draw nearer to the historical Jesus than ever before and stretch out our hands to him to draw him into our own time, we must give up the effort and be resigned to the paradoxical word: Even though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know him so no more. Still further we must understand that the *historical* knowledge of the essence and life of Jesus will not be a help but perhaps be a hindrance to

religion. Not the Jesus historically known, but only the Jesus spiritually risen in men, can be a potent help to our time. Not the historical Jesus but the spirit which issues from him and struggles for new results and new dominion in human spirits is that which overcometh the world. It is not given to history to release the permanent and eternal in Jesus from the historical forms in which it has externalized itself and to domesticate it as something dynamic and vital in our world. The eternal and the permanent in Jesus is totally independent of historical knowledge, and can be apprehended only upon the basis of the spirit at present operative in the world: so much spirit of Jesus, so much true knowledge of Jesus.[1]

2. Let us now look wider for a moment. Broadly speaking, religions are of two kinds: those with their faces turned toward the past, and those that face toward the

[1] So, too, Schweitzer, in *Von Reimarus zu Wrede* (Tübingen, 1906).

future.[1] One says, It was; the other, It shall be. The religious primitive myth of Brahmanism lives on *plusquam perfectum*, the religious primitive myth of Parsism lives on *plusquam futurum*. For the religious pessimism of the Buddhists, the ideal of perfection is to be found at the beginning of the world-process. This original perfection was lost, whether through fall, or guilt and atonement, with Anaximander, or through impulse and impetus, through resistence, with Fichte, or contradiction, with Hegel, is a question of myth and allegory rather than of principle. All religious pessimists agree that the pilgrimage of the universe is downward. The ideal of perfection is in the irrevocable past, along with the innocence of paradise. The world is a steady descent from pure fire or fine ether to gross earth, from reality to appearance, from eternal ideas to pale copies, from Deity's pure thought to the

[1] Here I have availed myself of much help fom Dr. Ludwig Stein, *Philosophische Strömungen der Gegenwart*, 1908.

transitory process of nature. The mythological parallel to this metaphysical pessimism is the widespread legend of the Golden Age, upon which the silver and the brass ensue. The church doctrine of the fall corresponds to this view. Civilization as descent, fall, symptom of the dissolution of nature—this is nothing but a special instance of the ecclesiastical doctrine of the fall.

As an offset to this pessimistic evaluation of the world and of life, of which Buddhism and neo-Platonism are illustrations, we have the Iranian–Persian religion of light, which projects the ideal of perfection, not backward into a distant past, but forward into the remotest future. The process of the world is reversed, and goes from the imperfect toward the perfect. The religious fantasy is turned forward and not backward. It does not delight in picturing what has been, what is irrecoverably lost, but in the promise of what is to come, in the apocalyptic glorification of the perfect

"at the end of the day." The prophetic, the Bacchic, the Orphic, the Sibylline books and chiliastic dreamers proclaim in hundredfold echo the millennial kingdom, the coming of joy. And such facing the future is characteristic of modern thought and work everywhere.

So, then, world-religion divides itself into a pessimistic and an optimistic method. Both strive for the purification, the redemption, the moral elevation of man. Nirvana religion and prophet religion seek the same goal: the moral perfection of the human race. Only, the regressive forms of religion, the romanticists among the religious philosophers, the advocates of the doctrines of the fall and of a lost paradise, follow the pedagogic method of making man more docile, more manageable, more resigned to the destiny of the world, as well as to his own personal fate, by establishing the course of the world as an inclined plane from eternity to eternity. The will of the individual is "broken" that the will of

the universe may be supreme and mandatory and compulsory. This is true of the doctrine of Buddha, the foreknowledge of the Greeks, the fate of the Romans, the predestination to sin on the part of the mediaeval church, the kismet of the Mohammedans, the rigid doctrine of providence of Calvin, of Spinozism and materialism, and so on.

Such is the insight of the philosophic historian of religion, and I have allowed Stein, in the book above mentioned, to interpret it for me.

Now which has the better stood the pragmatic test at the judgment-seat of history: the pessimistic or the optimistic religious hypothesis; Mohammedan fatalism or the Kantian doctrine of freedom? Which faith "works better," faith in a "lost paradise" or faith in the "kingdom of God on earth?" Buddhism or Messianism? the yearning elegiac "backwardness" of the romanticist, with its paralyzing "It was," or the brave, upright hosanna of the

religion of progress, with its Messianic psalmodic "It shall be" and its counsel, "Serve the Lord in joy?"

You see why I have laid the foundation broad and deep. It is to urge that we line up on the side of a religion of the future rather than of the past, that we turn our faces to the rising rather than to the setting sun.

To be sure, a bad as well as a good use may be made of this. You know that every church has maintained that the future was with it, and therefore has claimed the right to rule the future. To the Protestant it has been self-evident that the world was sure to become Protestant, and to the Catholic it has been equally self-evident that the whole world would bow the knee to its sole saving faith. The modern man takes no interest in this controversy. It smacks of ecclesiastical selfishness and vainglory. However, ours is not this old controversy, but the question as to the future of religion and the religion of the future. As to the

former, in my opinion all the age-long contempt for religion is at bottom contempt not for religion at all, but for the wrappings of religion which can be made to appear in such a ridiculous light. Religion must be evaluated as a creative activity of the human spirit—which reveals the eternity in a human heart and which shall be a pillar of fire for the pilgrimage of our race as long as man is man and nothing human is foreign to him. But of course this is personal, faith, not sight, conviction, not experience. There is always the possibility that something unforeseen, something incalculable, may happen. This possibility can vanish only by a clear insight into the religion of the future. The menace to the future of religion lies in the religion of the future.

But is not the future hidden in impenetrable gloom? Would it not be more important and more rational to live in the present? So we have ever been told. But a life so lived is weak and impotent. Such a

life in the present alone is consumed by the past. The beauty of the past is celebrated, the truth of the past is preached, and the good of the past is worshiped and imitated. Do you know how redemption from this cult of death came, how a new day dawned that believed in its own self? It was by making the future the program, the goal, the power of the present: the power of the age to come, says the old Epistle to the Hebrews. It was not by walking back through the world to pluck flowers which had grown out of graves. It was by the birth of the purpose that the church should be not so much a hospital as a true "labor union," that faith should be used not so much as crutch and medicine for our weakness as a power to lift us above our weakness—not simply reconciling us to our pain, but transforming pain into higher life and health.

Is not God the living God? Are we to think that God granted his power only to a few select souls and only once, for a few

decades or a century at most? If the Synoptists' Jesus were living today, would he not still speak of the Father as still sending the rain and clothing the lilies and caring for the sparrows and numbering the hairs of our heads? If John's Jesus were living today, would he not once again cry, My Father worketh *even until now?* Would not sin be forgiven with a fresh forgiveness, and peace be whispered with a living voice? Is not every living being a sign of the eternal creative power and omnipotent fullness of God? Then do not all participate in the omnipotent and creative divine energy? Then let us turn again from the demonstration of the letter and of history to the demonstration of the spirit and of power. Every man who awakens to new life and strength desires to create something new, something unheard of, something that has never been before, something which shall witness to the eternal and unwithering life of the human soul. We have today still the blind that

would see, the deaf that would hear, the lame that would walk, the leper that would be made whole. And if we are not able to give them that for which they yearn, that is, a light of their *own*, a life of their *own*, a power of their *own*, then is our faith a vain and dead thing which can never make the dead alive. Take some poor man who is blind and knows it not, and open his eyes that he may see in the deep of his own soul those invincible forces of life that would press up into the light—that would be a true miracle! snap the fetters which bind you to dead customs and slaveries, have the courage of your own convictions, and you have set a captive free! hearken not to public opinion so much as to the quiet, unexpressed voice of your own heart and conscience—remembering that truth is more powerful than public opinion—and you have made the deaf to hear, an outcast clean, the dead alive! This is the religion of power. Streams of living water flow from our souls. Liberation and illumination

stream from our words and works. Enthusiasm which purifies us from hopelessness and *ennui* flames forth from the spirit. A holy fire melts the ice of the heart. These would be the signs and miracles of a new age. They would witness to the worth and the future of man. Faith again would grow certain of itself, would see a supernatural in everything natural, a superhuman in all that is human. There would be, along with the living God, a living man, a life of the spirit, a springtime life of a coming humanity.

Then there would be no regrettable question as to which is the better faith, the "old" or the "new." There would be no old faith and there would be no new faith. There would be only weak faith and strong faith. There would be only the faith which speaks about *past* miracles and bases itself on *past* miracles and apologizes for *past* miracles about which it has *heard*, and the faith which *does* miracles now every day, every hour, enjoying perennial self-

rejuvenation in heart and life. Wherever there has been a faith born of God it has been a power and not a weakness, courage and not cowardice. Therefore every kind of weakness and cowardice is *unfaith*, no matter how ecclesiastical and pious it may be. Wherever men substitute custom for truth, wherever the antiquity of an ecclesiastical past, the geographical extent of a faith and the number of its adherents, pass as proof for the inner right and the inner vitality of a faith, there is also the abandonment of the demonstration of the spirit and of power. Every faith whose persistence depends upon its profession, "Once I was," is corroded with anxiety and weakness that makes it impotent to regenerate the human heart and to liberate the human spirit. The faith of power has the other watchword, "I shall be!" And its power is that it feels the future alive in it.

This prophet religion of the future, and not the Nirvana religion of the past, was Jesus' religion. He faced forward. Would

he not do so now? Men ask what Jesus thought, what he did. They mean that to think as he thought and to do as he did would be enough for them. They may do and think as Jesus did, but if Jesus were here today in our modern world would *he* do and think as he *did?* In many ways, not. He would cease to think some things and begin to think others; cease to do some things, and do others. The crystalline clearness of his mind and flawless truthfulness of his conscience would freely impel him to this. Were he alive today he would not copy the Jesus of that time and place. To copy even him is to kill the soul. He who said then, Let the dead bury their dead, go thou and seek the kingdom of God; I am come to set a man at variance with his father; put not new wine into old bottles nor new patch on old garment; I am come to kindle a fire upon the earth, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished—he who said these things and such things as these (and if he did not say these things we do not

know what he did say), and who condemned bitterly the custodians of the past who were not creators of a future, were he to walk up and down our earth today, would turn away from dead dogmas, injurious survivals, meaningless customs, moribund churches, and make a new future, re-create life, release the spirit, and trust a God who lives and loves today. This, not to repeat a dead past, is what he would have us to do. The new world, inner and outer, could not be ours as a gift, even from him. In the nature of the case, we must make it ourselves. And we are not in a position to deny that we could do this, should science conclude that he never lived at all. Indeed it is not impossible that, if science came to this conclusion, a sense of release and freedom would come to many a soul whose true spontaneity and free development are abridged by the dogma of the authority of Jesus.

But if he lived, as I hold that he did, what is his function in the religion of a

modern man? Not to fasten us to himself as a "letter" that would enslave and kill, whereas he stood for freedom and life. Not to have the effect of classicism in art, which sometimes buys up a whole subsequent age, so that there is only imitation and not creation, monotony and not diversity, servility and not freedom. Not to donate ideals from afar. That is excluded by the nature of ideals and the mode by which we acquire them.[1] And not to convert our religion into a religion of the past instead of a religion of the future. He said nothing of a lost paradise or of a fallen Adam or of a golden age in the past, nothing

[1] What could be finer on this subject than the following: "Our 'ideals,' our types of excellence, are the various ways in which we figure to ourselves the outsearching and ever-expanding values of our concrete acts. Every one achievement of good deepens and quickens our sense of the inexhaustible value contained in every right act. With achievement, our conception of the possible goods of life increases, and we find ourselves called to live upon a still deeper and more thoughtful plane. An ideal is not some remote all-exhaustive goal, a fixed *summum bonum*, with respect to which other things are only means. It is not something to be placed in contrast to the direct, local, and

of the glory of a sun that was set. He never said, "It was!" He only said, "It shall be!" But the *shall be* could be made to be only by putting the hand to the plow and not looking back. What then is the place of Jesus in the religion of a modern man? Any one of you can answer now. Once again I shall let Bousset answer for all of us:

But what now is the historical Jesus for us? Is it not for us indifferent, whether or not, behind this whole stream of life, behind the mighty phenomenon of Christianity, there stand a unified, personally living force? Faith ever points and presses forward into the future; it will create, mold, recruit; it is a forceful, strenuous [*geschäftig*], powerful, active thing. Is not this continuous

tangible quality of our actual situations, so that by contrast these latter are lightly esteemed as insignificant. On the contrary, an ideal is the conviction that each of these special situations carries with it a final value, a meaning which in itself is unique and inexhaustible. To set up 'ideals' of perfection which are other than the serious recognition of the possibilities of development resident in each concrete situation, is in the end to pay ourselves with sentimentalities, if not with words, and meanwhile it is to direct thought and energy away from the situations which need and which welcome the perfecting care of attention and affection."—Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics*, p. 422.

looking backward, living in memory, binding one's self to a remote, strange past, obstructive and dangerous for one's own life [*Wesen*]?

We shall try now, only very briefly, to meet this objection. A parallel from domain other than that of religion may be of assistance here. We might also ask: Do not the great creations of past art have a crippling and inhibiting effect upon the joy in creative work and the independence of the present generation? They have actually had such an effect on many periods of artistic life: I mean all periods of one-sided classicism. And yet it would be the height of folly for us to seek to free ourselves as far as possible from the great works and masters of the art of the past.

The case is exactly the same for the religious life. Neither art nor religion lives as do, for example, science and technology, from thoughts constituting an independent and closed system. Both art and religion are in a very different way dependent upon the past; they live upon the life of the great personalities of the past and their creations. Art in its original force is just in the works and persons of the great masters, at which ever anew new life is enkindled. So also religion is primarily present in the great dominating personalities of religious history, in the law-givers, prophets, founders of religions, and reformers. The history

of religion has here spoken too clearly. The religions which stand at the summit of development are those behind which—at their beginnings or in the course of them—stand great, effective personalities. And if we wished to explain (as is, however, impossible) all those personalities as myths and imaginary figures, still this instinct of personification, which shows itself ever anew at the highest points of religion, would remain inexplicable, and bear witness to the power of personality in the religious life. And this attachment of all religious life to great personalities appears more and more clearly in the course of history. The productive, independent, life-generating force of religion has fallen off. Since the appearance of Christianity, only one religion has arisen—Islam. And all the great personalities who have really furthered the course of Christianity have been convinced that they derived their life from the life of Jesus of Nazareth, whom, to be sure, in many cases, they only saw covered with thick and often very strange veils. Religion lives only in and from great personalities. We must ever anew kindle our little fire at their great fire. But the center and the highest point of all these leaders bearing the life of religion is the person of Jesus.

But if this is the case, those personalities, and this one surpassing them all, are not dead historical

past, which would be a fetter on the life of the present. They live and are present; the life of the present is kindled by them. It is our fault if there remains mere authority-faith and a dependence on the past. From the figure of Jesus of Nazareth sweeps on a stream of fresh life; but we throw ourselves into this stream and let it bear us.

Now that I have made this long quotation, I am not entirely satisfied with it. I once was, and urged the same point as powerfully as I could in my former book. It is not that I mean to recede from emphasis upon the epoch-making importance of outstanding personalities. It is, however, that I have come to wonder whether, for one thing, the emphasis be not a bit overdone, and, for another, whether the significance of the Great Man in the past shall be kept up in the future. You may think a moment of the genesis of our religion, to illustrate the first of my two scruples. Did Jesus entirely originate that primitive messianic cult with which our religion is continuous? On the contrary, the con-

tribution which the historical Jesus made thereto is most difficult to determine. It is probable that his self-consciousness powerfully influenced the development of the new community, that it was through his own messianic certainty that his person became the center of the "gospel"—his *person*, now of more value to the circle of the faithful than his *cause*. It was not the ethico-religious message which Jesus proclaimed, it was salvation through the Messiah, that was the central thing in this original faith of primitive Christianity. It was not a Jesus cult; it was a Messiah cult. Sharply enough has Professor Otto Pfleiderer combated present-day historical error on this subject:

> We will guard carefully against committing the error so widespread today of reading into the biblical documents something they do not contain, and of putting aside everything which they do contain that is not entirely agreeable to our modern manner of thinking. It is in such fashion that the well-known Jesus romances originate, shooting up like mushrooms from the ground; we may well

grant those poets the privilege of doing such work but they ought not to lay claim to the credit of telling actual history. Just that which to the modern consciousness is odd, which in fact seems to offend it, just that usually reveals that which is historically most characteristic—the thing upon which the thoroughgoing success of the Christian faith rested.[1]

In other words, it was precisely those "supernatural" and catastrophic parts of the movement which history itself has shown to be an error of the period; it was miracle and mystery and sacrament and charisms, which are now interesting problems of psychology and not content of religious metaphysics—it was precisely these things that were most effective in that primitive situation. And yet not these alone. A number of observations should be made here. Not a single factor, but only a plurality of factors, is cause of an event. No one person makes a religion, any more than one person makes a language.

[1] *Religion and Historic Faith*, pp. 252 ff.

What can be more complicated, more logical, more marvelous than a language? Yet whence can this admirably organized production have arisen, except it be the outcome of the unconscious genius of crowds? The most learned scholars, the most esteemed grammarians, can do no more than note down the laws that govern languages. They would be utterly incapable of creating them. Even with respect to the ideas of great men, are we certain that they are exclusively the offspring of their brains? No doubt such ideas are always created by solitary minds, but is it not the genius of crowds that has furnished the thousands of grains of dust forming the soil in which they have sprung up?[1]

Similarly, Jesus by himself alone could never have led to the organization of a new cult. To begin with, such a community could not have arisen had not the Roman officials ruling in Judea made it a matter of policy not to interfere with the inner religious affairs of the people, unless political necessity required them to do so. Then, again, Judaism at that time was acquainted with very various sectarian formations:

[1] Gustave Le Bon, *The Crowd*, p. 9.

Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes. There were also separate rabbinical schools. These new messianists, by no means disengaged from the common Israelitish stock, could easily pass as another school, or order, or sect, in the eyes of the Roman authorities. But for another thing especially, the new cult could never have arisen had it not been for the inveterate messianic hope and the traditional messianic dogmatics which so apprehended and assimilated Jesus, which so messianized him, that his own central message is obscured here. Would not Jesus have said to these messianic worshipers, It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve? Most of all must we think of the immemorial historical creations of whole peoples, stones carved from so many quarries at cost of so much sweat and blood, for the building of this new temple! God, Spirit, Messiah, resurrection, judgment-day, kingdom of heaven—consider the age-long historic experience which de-

veloped these concepts in the function of a higher life. Was not a greater contribution made to their formation and skill of functioning by the long racial experimentation and achievement than was made by Jesus himself, even? Besides, we have just begun to trace the relations of our ecclesiastical beginnings, inchoate, even then, to the hidden, far-off, primitive sagas of other folk-travail, and also to Israelitish popular lore. Multitudinous toil from numberless individuals and nations earned the heritage of messianism into which the primitive community now entered—other men and peoples labored, and it entered into their labors. And if Jesus, with joy and gratitude, would have his disciples recognize this principle as they reaped the Samaritan harvest, he would have been the first to pay tribute to the sowers and reapers from out the gray historic life of that messianic harvest which his disciples were now to garner. To be sure, his own contribution was epoch-making, but, as I have said,

there is a real sense in which epoch-makers are themselves made. It is difficult to state this matter briefly without seeming to contradict the underivable originality of Jesus, but the contradiction is only apparent, and I hold to both, as I do to both individualism and collectivism in social philosophy.

But my second critical remark upon Bousset's position—which, nevertheless, is, as I say, for substance still my own—is as to whether the Great Man shall be as controlling in the future as in the past. Aristocracies of the old kind are passing away: feudal aristocracies, aristocracies of birth, capitalistic aristocracies. A new aristocracy is arising, the *aristocracy of democracy*, *knights* of labor. The emphasis is to be upon *the people*. The Creator seems to have thought that one Niagara was enough for a continent, but he has made thousands of little streams to flow by our homes and through our fields, and the glory and greatness of our country is due not so much to

Niagara as to these little streams which gladden and refresh the earth. Not denying the kindling power of the Great Man of the past, are we not showing wisdom in finding inspiration and rebuke in the cheerful godliness, the fidelity to duty, the heroic and uncomplaining self-sacrifice, the unselfish love and service manifested by plain men and women in the common lot all around us today—by the washerwoman supporting her family of little children, the unfortunate merchant who sacrifices every comfort and pleasure that he may quietly pay his honest debts, the young man who gives up college that he may earn the money for his sister's education, the old people toiling in the dark at the mountain's foot to keep the boy in school so that, as they say, he may have a better chance in life than they have had. Ah, my friends, human nature's soil did not exhaust itself in growing one bright consummate flower; the earth is bursting with new bloom every day. "But the beautiful life which is lived by the

'common herd' today, has not that life come from the life of Jesus?" you ask. That is just the point. Has it? What is the fact? Is human goodness aristocratic, nay, monarchic, or is it democratic? All prejudices and fears aside, it is evident that human nature's creative power in the world of goodness is not limited to the Great Man and the Great Man's influence, but, though graded, is immanent and constant in the race; it is evident, therefore, that the democratic goodness about us is not so much a donation from Jesus as a creation of modern men who are as certainly children of God as Jesus was himself —if so be, as Paul said, God is One. The contrary position is a survival of the ecclesiastical doctrine of original sin, of the *non posse non peccari*, of the total moral inability of man on account of the fall, a position which, though not meant to be such, is really blasphemy against both God and man. Think of our human patriotism, often with its self-immolating heroism; of

our love of family and home, often with its chaste grace and beauty; of our social life, not without its neighborliness; of our business world, with its energy and survey and foresight, not without its fine philanthropies; of our land dotted with schools, where ideals sprout and bloom: think of these things, and you cannot escape the conviction that they are traceable to the elemental and inalienable impulses and processes of human nature itself even more than to the Man of Galilee, who indeed does not seem to have made much of any of them. And even if you think of the achievement of an autonomous good will for which Jesus seems to have centrally stood, we know that it belongs to the idea and plan of the human itself to press forward to the mark of the prize of this high calling. This was the great message of Kant, but can we honestly contend that Kant either derived the message from Jesus or depended chiefly upon Jesus for its fulfilment?

But I must not pursue the subject farther

at this time. I trust I have hurt no one's feelings. In my opinion, what I have said would meet with the approval of that Jesus who thought of himself as *like* the good shepherd that laid down his life for the sheep, *like* the father of the prodigal, whose loving and wounded heart forgave all, *like* the poor widow, who gave her all, all her living; *like* the good Samaritan, rather than like the aristocratic priest and levite. And it was because he was *like* this homely democratic goodness, which he did not make, but *found already there*, that he was greater than the monarchic David or Solomon.

VI

One more item shall I pick up: the function of the church. And while it belongs to the nature of religion to institutionalize itself in what may not improperly be called church, I shall restrict my remarks to the church in our Christian religion, and indeed to the place of the church in the life of the modern man.

1. There is a sense in which the Christian church has been losing ground ever since the beginning of the Crusades of the Middle Age. At that time it was absolute in its dominion over man, internally and externally, here and hereafter. It had the keys. It was the custodian and cultivator of all the higher interests of man. The priest was the poet, the scientist, the philosopher, the moralist, the scholar, the artist. It was ever thus in the world of mass as against the world of personality. Among our western peoples this primitivity

of life lasted throughout the Middle Age. All higher culture was in the hands of the clergy. The clergy was the church. But in the Crusades the layman—knight and citizen—was born. A lay culture began to develop toward some independence. Then came the Renaissance, a world-historical tide in the affairs of men. Now the layman grew and multiplied and replenished the earth. New worlds were discovered in the heavens above and in the earth beneath. States were born; cities were founded; vocations were started; capital was created; families were founded; liberation of science and art from the domination of religion and church was striven for; emancipation of the people's school and teaching office from the hegemony of the clergy was slowly conquered; and secular civilization began to soar as inch by inch it struggled free from the church. At length the question arose as to whether the church had not fulfilled its task, now that these new agencies and values had arrived at their majority and

severed themselves from the leading-strings of the church. Like an old useless tree, whose fruitbearing days are over, can and will the church now die?

2. We too have a similar question on our hands today. The difficulty of our ecclesiastical situation is not due to the attacks of her foes upon her. There is no great man today who is a foe to the church. Her critics are her friends. Nor is the difficulty due to the estrangement of the masses from the church. That estrangement is effect, not cause. What is the cause of the estrangement? Is it traceable to irreligion and immorality? On the contrary, it would be nearer the truth to say that it is due to the rise of a new religion and a new morality, of which the church is neither creator nor custodian. But this is not the *crux* of the matter. The difficulty in which the church finds herself today is due to the emergence of triumphant competitors as bearers of the ideal interests of humanity, in which the church formerly had a mo-

nopoly. The spiritual values of the people are conserved and nurtured by other agencies than the church. Such agencies naturally drain off from the church and draw to themselves the support and enthusiasm of the people. Therefore, the reason people do not support and attend the church, as they otherwise would, is not because they are indifferent to ideals but because other institutions express and promote their ideals; not because they are bad but because they are good. Time was when the church controlled a folk from afar; now the folk has arrived at self-government with all that this involves. Time was when the church founded all manner of educational institutions; the state has become the bearer of our educational ideals and work, and the church has practically ceased to build schools, and ought to cease to do so entirely. Time was when the church cared for all our charities; now the state is rapidly assuming this prerogative and exercising it with increasing

intelligence and humanity. Indeed the state not infrequently finds itself handicapped and irritated by the more clumsy hands and crude measures with which the church intrudes into this task. Time was when transgressors were disciplined and restored by the church; now the state, in pedagogic wisdom, is seeking to save and not to destroy the man who has been overtaken in a fault. Time was when morality was the special interest for which the church should care—not simply doctrinal morality, but ethical morality as well; now the home and the school are far more important trainers of the moral life of our people. The child's half-hour at Sunday school, where the teaching is so often execrable, is a negligible quantity as compared with habits of industry and honor and truthfulness and accuracy and reverence which our devoted and conscientious and high-minded public-school teachers are helping our children to form during five days of the week. And the home must ever

be the first school of morals. Time was when the church did not provide amusement for the people, indeed, but taught them that they must forego amusement as a moral peril. Now, although the church, supposedly impelled, not by a change of heart but by the instinct of self-preservation, would run a variety show, it finds kindred theaters springing up like mushrooms in our cities and vying with the church for a good share of the patronage of the people.

3. The church's instinct of self-preservation! There are other things, less light and airy than amusement, of which the church has availed herself under the promptings of her instinct for self-preservation. To what ugly spirit and deeds has this instinct—common to the life of every organism, indeed—incited the church in its struggle for existence! There is an old biblical story which may point a moral and adorn a tale. You have read about the sacred temple of great Diana, under whose

aegis the city by the sea flourished, to whose genius a grateful people dedicated a costly shrine. Every good and devout citizen prided himself on having an image from the sacred place in his house. The image was a symbol of the blessing with which the goddess had blessed the fathers. Beneath this symbol they would themselves live. They would gaze upon it with loving devotion, so that the goddess would be gracious to them, protect their homes, their land, and their possessions. This was piety, loyalty to the faith of the fathers, the yearning of one's own soul, the cry of one's own need, and at the same time the quiet gratitude of the heart, which was poured out before the temple image of the great goddess. Then there arose a new doctrine in the land,—the doctrine that gods do not dwell in temples made with hands, the doctrine of a God who fills the world with his spirit, in whom we too live and move and have our being. And the new faith was only the response to an old doubt,

which had long been stirring in the soul, when they fervently prayed to their city divinity and set up the temple image in every chamber, and yet the prayer came back unanswered and the devastating hosts of death did not halt before the chamber in which there was Diana's shrine. So the temple images fell into discredit. They were expensive luxuries, useless ballast which one dragged along. But a great industry had developed at Ephesus on the basis of this pious faith of the people, an industry which carried on a lively trade in images, so that the pious faith of the people had become a lucrative business. What was once a symbol of pious faith was now a fetish, which must be cried up to the people; and if ever the business stagnated, of course an influential personality could be found, whose name would revive trade in the wonder-working images and thus maintain the glorious traditions of the people of Ephesus as the guardians of religion. But it looked as if Paul was go-

ing to kill the whole business. He supplied water to the mill of the free-thinkers which had been grinding away quietly for a long time. Already the religious corporation that lived on the image trade had observed a decline in business. Inquiries were less frequent in spite of the more and more spectacular and sensational advertisement of its wares. But Demetrius understood the business. He knew the people and their instincts. The people would never consent to see their faith destroyed; therefore let the corporation assume the rôle of defenders of the faith! "Religion is in danger, your faith is attacked!" was their cry, and it was quickly taken up and repeated by the people who rallied around the business speculators, now heroes of the faith. "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" sounded forth from a thousand throats, and the loud acclaim was proof positive that Paul and the little group of free-thinkers must be wrong; for the truth is the truer where the noise is the louder. And so once again

faith was saved and a people's religion preserved.

I do not need to tell you that this was not the first and not the last time that religion has been saved to a people. It was saved in Athens when Socrates was condemned to death because he corrupted the youth and introduced strange gods. It was saved in Jerusalem when Jesus Christ was nailed to the cross because be blasphemed the people's God and preached a new God. And all the funeral pyres which have been built by the ecclesiastical corporation, when it has seen its business in jeopardy—the, massacre of St. Bartholomew, the nameless cruelties of the Inquisition—are but variations of the old theme: Great is Diana of the Ephesians! To the greater glory of God, sand is thrown into the eyes of the people that they may not detect the monstrous deception with which faith is used as a pretext by which the transparent interests of selfishness and ambition are concealed, and that the name of God may

be misused in the interest of the shameful exploitation of the people. Strangest and worst of all is the fact that there are brawlers who place throat and lungs at the disposal of this pious business enterprise and whose cry is effective, not because the people understand the meaning of the cry and are convinced of its truth, but because they are borne forward by the general excitement, because they do not possess the courage and strength to maintain their composure in the general tumult and patiently look into the matter for themselves. In our day, too, we also have our experiences of these things, although there is no cross and no pyre. We see how men are fanaticized by the cry that their religion is in danger, that someone is about to rob them of their faith. And whoever delights in scandal or in a popular tumult needs but to start the rumor that Paul has come who teaches that there are no gods which dwell in temples men's hands have made. Then all those who, directly or

indirectly, get their bread from these temples, with an unerring instinct of self-preservation, get to arms at once; and if the people do not make an uproar the ecclesiastical newspapers inflame them, taking the cry that no one can be a good Christian who does not shoulder arms. In recent decades, biblical scholars in America have opposed to the old faith in the letter of the gospel miracles the higher, better faith in the spiritual, mythological content of those stories. Then came the clerical tumult, fomenting popular tumult, that Great Diana of the Ephesians might be protected against these bold innovators—and all because a favorite opinion of ecclesiastical theologians was undermined. If the anxiety had really been concerning religion, concerning Christianity, then these tumult-makers would not have intimidated, inflamed, fanaticized, but would have investigated, questioned, exposed and refuted error when possible, and would have adduced the demonstration of the

spirit and of power that the better spirit of truth, the purer Christ-spirit of love and righteousness, might prevail in the churches. But no, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! And whoever dares to preach another greatness, to doubt her greatness, is a dangerous man to the church, a foe to religion and to faith.[1] Oftentimes there has been nothing back of these church controversies but the interests of theologians who saw their own influence jeopar-

[1] "And it matters not in what form that claim to infallibility is made: whether in the clear, consistent way in which Rome asserts it, or whether in the inconsistent way in which churchmen make it for their church, or religious bodies for their favorite opinions: wherever penalties attach to a conscientious conviction, be they the penalties of the rack and flame, or the penalties of being suspected and avoided, and slandered, and the slur of heresy affixed to the name, till all men count him dangerous lest they too should be put out of the synagogue. And let every man who is engaged in persecuting any opinion ponder it—these two things must follow—you make fanatics, and you make skeptics; believers you cannot make.

"Therefore do we stand by the central protest and truth of Protestantism. There is infallibility nowhere on this earth: not in Rome; not in councils or convocations; not in the Church of England; not in priests; not in ourselves. The soul is thrown in the grandeur of a sublime

dized when the miraculous power of their temple-images, the sole saving power of their doctrines, was called in question and a freer, unscholastic religion preached to the people.

But I must not waste bitter words upon the subject. I have no bitter words to waste. And I know how to distinguish between these ecclesiastics and those quiet and beautiful souls who bow before the

solitariness on God. Woe to the spirit that stifles its convictions when priests threaten, and the mob which they have maddened cries heresy, and insinuates disloyalty—'Thou art not Caesar's friend.'"—Frederick W. Robertson's sermon on "The Skepticism of Pilate."

To these illuminating words of England's greatest preacher, I may be permitted to add a thought which has come to me through my own observation and experience. Whenever a public servant of the cause of religion teaches new views which deviate from ecclesiastical beliefs, there are three possibilities open to those who are in authority over him: (1) To maintain reasonable freedom of teaching and trust truth to come out all right in the end, no matter which side be in error now. This policy alone honors truth; (2) To stand by the teacher but make to the public a compensatory pronunciamento with *conservative* leanings; (3) To go back on the teacher but make to the public a compensatory pronunciamento with *liberal* leanings. It is this last which has been almost always done hitherto.

images in their homes at Ephesus in love and worship. I know that today still the image is to them a symbol of everlasting love and faithfulness, because the picture awakens in their hearts an eternal yearning and speaks to them of the deepest and dearest mystery of the human heart. But I know, too, that these beautiful and quiet souls seek such blessings in vain in places where the tumult is made in order that some new thought may be smitten down. These rich souls also know quite well that, as they themselves live by their own faith, so others must live by *their* own faith likewise; they join the vast church invisible of all honorable spirits, where each speaks in his own tongue the wonderful works of God, as God gives him to speak. They all share the conviction of Gamaliel, who confronted the persecutors of the apostles of a *new* faith with the *eternal* faith that if the new faith was not of God it would come to nought; but that if it was of God it would succeed. And they do not presume to

separate wheat and tares in the great garden of God, but let both grow together till the harvest, when God will make the separation. But this is not the spirit of the clerical industry which derives an advantage from religion and forges weapons out of it in order to keep men in bondage. Everything is irreligious and godless which injures their business; and a free faith, a free religion, destroys the nimbus about them and their ecclesiastical handiwork. Whether a sacred image of Diana be offered for sale with the understanding that the purchaser does a pious deed and merits the favor of Diana, or whether it be a sacred precept or sacred formula of faith which churchmen have welded together and proffered believers, this makes no sort of difference. And whether Demetrius in Ephesus makes his influence felt with the people to draw them to the temple and their patronage to the image "trust," or whether an ecclesiastic pulls wires in the interest of a Christian church, this makes

no difference either. There is only one thing that will save religion in either situation: that is, the *freedom* of religion, the *freedom* of the faith; for this alone is the inner living religion of the heart.

But that is not the point I wish to make now. I am now trying to get the church to see that it has been on the wrong track with its instinct of self-preservation, with its dogging the footsteps of science, blocking its every advance; with its love of dogmas, rather than search for truth; with its pride, rather than service; with its clericalism rather than humanism; with its facing backward instead of forward. Nor can I allow the church to lay to itself the soothing unction that the outraged feeling of modern men, their indignant protest against the attitude of the church, springs from their hostility to religion. That is not true. They foster religion. They have no hostility to the church, even, but know that the church is the outside of which religion is the inside. They do not

believe that religion can live and thrive without church. Their hostility is to those usurpations and maladjustments of the church by virtue of which religion is perverted and the free and normal development of human culture is menaced. This indictment is against the church because the church is always on the reactionary side of every question, binds free spirits, sanctifies hoary and entrenched wrongs, robs thought of its clearness and breadth, the will of its autonomy and strength. It is for this reason that there has grown up in many circles something akin to contempt for the three words, church, sermon, dogmatics: church —a whited sepulcher, full of dead men's bones, a place where death is treated as if it were life and life as if it were death; preaching—proof that there is still such a thing as sounding brass and clanging cymbal; dogmatics—that science whose only right to be is that men may see what a science ought not to be, that science which clarifies what the heart would fain keep as

mystery, and mystifies what the head would fain clarify. So strong is this feeling in many circles that the Christian minister who would seek to do them good could wish that he were not a clergyman, not even a church member, knowing full well that he would get closer to the hearts of the people and tell them the religious faith of his own heart all the more easily were he no preacher or theologian or communicant even.

But it is a thankless and disagreeable task to interpret the nemesis of the church which, like the rest of us, must reap the terrible harvest which it has sown, and like the rest of us, when we fall into sin, repent with repentance unto life and renewal. Or is the day for churches past? Other organisms, other institutions created by the race, have had their day of service, their slow and painful death, and ceased to be. Is it now the church's turn? I do not think so. What ought we to do? One thing is needful above all others: not to

tear up by the roots and throw away the old vine which once bore noble fruit from noble stock, but to plant its roots and fibers deep in the earth that they may take root there anew and be revitalized thereby. And what is the earth in which slumbers the sap of life for our churches? It is the *hearts of the people*, of creative humanity with its joys and sorrows. Out of the hearts of the people has every great spiritual movement been born. The same God who was present in those movements is present still, the same to whom once the weary and heavy-laden, publicans and sinners, the outcasts of humanity prayed: Thou art our Father, we are thy children.

4. But what now is the function of the church? Two answers have been given: the service of God, the service of man. Into each answer we should look for a moment.

a) The function of the church, then, is said to be the service of God. "Divine services": is not that thought a slap in the

face for our modern view of the world? God—we leave this sacred name its place of honor in the language of humanity. God—so speaks the heart when it receives from the deep of life an answer to its hidden questioning and yearning. But *service* of God—that calls up old memories of unspeakable aberrations, to which the history of this phrase points, from orgies of cruelest lust which men practiced to the glory of God down to the covert bargains which men seek to drive with their God on Sundays when they impose upon themselves the sacrifice of church-going that God may reward them therefor with some advantage in this life or after death. We think of the hecatombs of human sacrifices which have been slain in the service of God—and then look upon all the crippled and stunted spirits, made such by misguidedly repressing their noblest energies and extinguishing the clear light of reason and of conscience in the interest of their service of God. To serve God—is this not to flatter him with

loud laudation, to court his favor by cringing servility? And yet no man, by loudest songs and most importunate prayers, can add one cubit to his stature; the course of life is eternally ordered so that no hair falls from the head save by God's will. And in the service of the Catholic church, especially, all sorts of excesses are practiced, far more than we usually think, to which magic power is ascribed by persons who are otherwise far enough from believing in signs and wonders. Everywhere else in life we know that a man reaps what he sows. In the church shall they reap something other than what they sowed, or reap without sowing at all? Shall spiritual values be gained without earnest, inner spiritual work? Shall a new knowledge of truth, or a new power of goodness be attained? In view of such considerations as these—a *service* of God in which men's powers of work and thought do not come into play at their best—not a few serious and strong men, creative spirits glad of

life, turn aside from such service as a waste of time. The service of God? Every ray of light must serve God, as it gives light and warmth to the earth, and carries a greeting of divine life and love to all men. The winds are his messengers and he makes the flaming fire his minister. All nature serves him. And shall man lag behind here—man with the light of reason, warmth of heart, strength of will and life? You see why I say this: such real service of God is not the function of the church as an institution, but of man as man. The other kinds of service where they were not wrong were too little for the church; this is too much.

b) Shall we then rescue a place for the church in modern life by assigning her practical tasks, the service of man? But what tasks? Politics, education, morals, charity, medicine? The church is now dabbling in all these, especially in politics, charity, and medicine. That it does so is proof that it is bewildered, desperate,

confused as to what its true function is. Its clergy has three possibilities,—to be "prophet," "priest," or "king." Having once gloriously climbed up into the mount of prophecy, it seems they found the air too rarefied, the crags too hard to scale, life too lonely, so they "slipped, sliddered down" to the lowlands where they can assume the easy rôle of the primitive "medicine man," as "priest," or execute institutional chores, or dabble in ecclesiastical politics, as "king." Out of joint with the world of modern thought the church will dole out charity as an all-sufficient *raison d'être*—forgetting the decisive consideration that the advantage which philanthropy gains by spending neither time nor strength *in thought* cannot in the long run make up for the disadvantage to which spiritual life is exposed from the fact that independence is shackled by dread of free discussion of the most important questions in life. Is man a body to be clothed and fed, or a nervous system to be psycho-

therapeutically healed? If that be all there is to us, it does not make much difference whether there be even that or not. Besides, as you remember, I have indicated that special agencies have emerged and matured whose *natural* and *specific* function it is to care for disease and destitution and politics, aye, and education and morals. I am very far from meaning that the church shall not participate in the practical activities of love. It must. In the extremities of life we expect help from the church. It shall call the spirit of love into service, collect our scattered energies, and preserve them from disintegration. It shall shield the weak from danger, with a protecting hand, provide a refuge for them in the battles and temptations of life which have become too much for them. To comfort sufferers, to dry their tears, to guide the erring, to bring the blessings of peace and of love into every home and every heart—this is indeed the calling of the church. And it is a high and beautiful

calling. For the church to do *this* will of the Father in heaven is far more important than to teach men to say, "Lord, Lord!" And the deeper the wounds of the present-day life, with its fearfully acute struggle for existence, the more necessary is such savior-like work; and wherever the church faithfully and conscientiously fulfils this, its calling, and becomes a good Samaritan indeed to poor wounded human nature on the roadside of our murderous modern struggle, all men—even the excommunicated—will soon learn to say of her: She hath loved much, therefore is much forgiven her! Of such a church men will little note nor long remember whether she cherishes rational or irrational articles of belief, knowing full well that life and love are greater than cult and dogma. And the seat of the scorner will be empty.

Nevertheless, there is a "but" in the case still. Is all this as *specifically and naturally* the function of the church as seeing is of the eye, education of the school,

politics of the state, the rearing of children of the family? Supposing all this labor of love and neighborly activity could exorcise the evil spirits of pride and pharisaism —which I do not for one moment believe— still, from such a point of view the church would ever be only the stop-gap for the imperfections and sins of society. To be sure, her activity to make up for the defects of society would still be needed for a long time to come. *But*, shall the church base her *raison d'être* upon this necessity? In that case, she must either eternalize this necessity or condemn herself to progressive reduction and gradual death. She must do what she is doing now, hobble along behind all the progress of life, perhaps regarding that progress with envious and jealous eye, because every new advance would make her by so much superfluous, limiting her field of labor or imposing upon her the humiliating necessity of being a busybody and interloper in regions now normally occupied by other institutions.

As I have already said, it is whispered around in regions of reform and charity and education and politics and medicine that the church is something of a bungler and intruder, practicing squatter sovereignty in territories to which she has no constitutional right.

Therefore, I am unable to find the *natural and specific* function of the church in this region of practical activity. That function is to be found neither in *that* service of God nor in *this* service of man. What shall she do? What shall she do? Is her fate that of King Lear, who likewise distributed his goods among his children and was pushed out into the street? Shall our attitude toward the church be the pessimistic "It was" or the optimistic "It shall be?"

For the rest, so long as Paul is understood, we cannot allow that it is the function of the church to lord it over our faith. The incarnate contempt for the church which I depicted a few moments ago can

be met only by assuring the world that we understand that there can be no power exercised over faith, without thereby petrifying life and converting faith into hypocrisy. Faith must find a sanctuary where its divine life is free to follow its own laws of life. This sanctuary is not the church, but the heart, where man is alone with himself and his God. You recall our contention that your God is just *your God*. You feel his life in you. His Spirit dwells in your spirit. If you have lost your God no man can give him back to you, no priest, no theologian, no church. You must yourself seek his face until he lifts up the light of his countenance upon you. You must wrestle with your own weakness and need until you trace his power again in you. And if your whole faith were nothing but illusion, it would yet, just because it was *your* faith in reality, give you more light and warmth for your journey of life than the best and purest faith of another man which yet was not yours. Your *faith* is

your *life*, nay, is your innermost eternal self. By it you are rooted in God. Through it all your other experiences are gathered up and comprehended in God. In this sense, faith is your private affair, the inside. But is there no outside?

I can now say the word which has been in my mind all the time I have been saying words which may have seemed harsh and unsympathetic to you. I have not meant them to be such. I believe that the church is a necessary institution to man's best life. I believe that the pastoral office is, in idea, the most important servant of the highest life of man. I believe that the preaching of the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. In a word, I believe that the church has a function as *natural and specific* as that of the eye in the body, or that of the school or the family or the state. And I must now give the reason for my belief.

What would your faith be if it were *only* your faith, your faith *alone?* Suppose you felt that you had your faith all by yourself

in this wide, wide world. Then you would feel so unspeakably lonely, so strange, so un-understood in the great world of men. Then your heart would ache with pain, and you would be like a little child laughing and weeping, reaching out its little hand into emptiness but finding no loving hand there that clasps its own. And if you did not feel this woe and homesickness of soul, yours would be a worse case still. Then your faith would have lost its connection with its eternal ground. It would have been carried off into captivity to selfishness, it would have been poisoned by selfishness. Your *God* would then mean your fetish, your idol; and you would fall down before it that it might fill your never-satisfied hands or lend sanctity to your petty personal vanity. And self-seeking is never more tyrannical, more insatiable, than when it would make use of God and seek to be pious that man may think only of his own salvation and care of *his* soul.

There is no denying it: we need the

church, a community of men in which we interchange the faith of our heart in living, mutual fellowship with the hearts of other men, in which our spirit mirrors itself in the stream of life whereby the spirits of other men are upborne. The certitude of our faith depends upon the discernment of itself in others' hearts; the endearment of our faith is increased by seeing the enlargement of our faith. Besides, where is the man that can bear about in his soul some great word which burdens him in the depths of his being and not express it that he may hear its echo in souls like-minded with his own, souls striving for the same goal?

Take an illustration. There is the world of artistic genius. Why do artists get together? To have a big feast? To pass resolutions on city sanitation? To agitate for the prohibition party? To denounce the mayor? To promote psychic research into the subconsciousness and to study nerves? They might. But there is

nothing *naturally and specifically* artistic about all this. The board of trade might do it. The Republican party might do it. But *naturally and specifically* artistic genius forms a community in which it is understood, in which it is fructified ever anew by mutual intelligence, in which the artistic sentiment is expressed and enjoyed and enriched. The artistic sentiment grows by expression. But what is the good of artistic sentiment if it does not bake bread, and instruct the mayor, and pass temperance resolutions, and support a psychotherapeutic class? We all know that the sentiment of the beautiful has a right to be for its own sake, and that the bearers of this sentiment spontaneously and necessarily get together, deep calling unto deep, in their hunger to see the life and love of art lived and loved in others' souls. Every human fulness seeks its field on which it can rain down and bring forth a harvest of life and blessing. Shall it not be so of religion —religion, the best, the richest, the holiest

life that a man may call his own, his life in God and with God? How shall he keep this life locked up in his own soul without forming a fellowship of spirits whom he animates, by whom he is animated; whom he blesses, by whom he is blessed? I long to see you, says Paul, in order that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, and so give you fresh strength—*or rather, that both you and I may find encouragement in each other's faith.* There you have it. And there the church has something which no progress of culture can take away. There the church has something all its own. There it is as autonomous as the school or the home or medicine or amusement is in its sphere. There it is honorable and honored and free. There, moreover, unlike these others, it is universally human. The church is the place where man is not political man, nor scientific man, nor family man, nor medical man, nor churchman—least of all that—but just *man.* And from the life of religion by which a man is

rooted in God and made most deeply one with his human brothers, all the channels of these other particular modes of life are flushed with living water ever anew, so that they are thereby served and sanctified in the very substance of their being—served far better than they could be by our ecclesiastical butting in and usurping of their functions. It is only because religion, like art, has a right to be on its own account that it can become the servant of all.

And that brings me to a word, previously incidentally uttered, indeed, which is to my mind more important than anything else which I have tried to say. In all the processes necessary to the growth of religion in its function of the preservation of man—the man growing larger and finer—there is at the same time that self-effectuation of religion on account of which it is inadequate and unworthy to speak of it as that experience which is a mere means to other experiences. It is of the utmost importance to add, as I have just done, that it is an experi-

ence which has a right to be on its own account, as a part of the completion of the human organism. You remember that I said that what arises in the organism in the interests of its self-preservation becomes itself necessary to the organism's self-completion and self-harmony. What is thus true, for example, of the eye in the body, or of judgment in the mind, is true of religion. Means though it is to the ends of the whole, it is itself an end to which the whole contributes, by which the whole is consummated. So I trust that you will not think that I am going out of my way when I add this word in my evaluation of the functional importance of religion. I do not wish to be guilty of the degradation of religion as one would be guilty of the degradation of anything by treating it as mere means to an end. We must think of this phenomenon as non-ancillary, as autonomous, as self-glorious, just as we do of a beautiful form and face, the penetration of the human intellect, the moral discernment of the human

conscience, or the heroic spirit of the martyr—this religious feeling of the unfathomable deep of the world, of the ideal-achieving capacity of existence, of the dependableness and helpfulness of the order of which we are made so constantly aware. All this is to be taken into account as a part of the human which is worth while for its own sake and not simply as an instrument which will serve other ends.

Were not this true, our deepest need—the need of a fidelity in things which we could trust, of a glory that we could adore, of an all-beautiful and an all-fair that would charm—would not be satisfied. So you see that the very satisfactions which are achieved by the functions of religion can become our possession only in case that religion be not means alone but end as well.

But, end though it be, religion must be nurtured, as must art or the moral life. The difficulties in the way are not insuperable. What is most of all needed just now

is the insight which ought to be the most fundamental and the most evident wisdom of the servant of religion, the insight that to preserve and promote religion, it is not geology, astronomy, and biology, and least of all psychology and politics, that must be prosecuted, but—*religion*.

VII

This little volume may very well close with a brief word upon one more topic—the function of the Book in a religion, again illustrated by and restricted to, the place of the Bible in our Christian religion.

1. As you go up and down our troubled and tortured time you hear a twofold reproach, the one contrary to the other. According to the one, we are guilty of subjecting the life of the human spirit in the present to the authority of the past. Our knowledge and capacity are mainly historical heritage, and therefore have only historical value. We are so mortgaged to the past that we do not make a future. The forces of history fetter the freedom of the present. The burdens of the dead bend and break the back of the living. According to the other reproach, we are entirely too unhistorical. Our self-reliance amounts to an obsession. We lack respect for the

wisdom of other ages. We are guilty of irreverence and iconoclasm. Turning our backs upon the spirit of the ancestors, we carry on a passionate cult of the present.

Identity with the past, breach with the past; traditionalism, independentism—this is the twofold censure visited upon our age from different quarters. And these two opposite attitudes *are* noticeable in every religion of life. But it is especially in the church that these two, the historical forces of a past culture and the hot pulsating life of the present, clash; and the shock is felt throughout the church today, from center to circumference, no matter whether the church be old or new, bound or free, high or low, broad or narrow.

2. But it is in the Bible that the power of the past confronts us most palpably. For millenniums the Bible has controlled, to a marvelous degree, the thought and emotion and conduct of men. We speak its language in our counsel to men and in our supplication to God; we echo its

psalms in our songs. But, on the other hand, the modern spirit has turned upon the Bible with its sharpest weapons. It is simply an application to the Bible of the method which has obtained in English philosophy for the last two hundred and fifty years. Biblical criticism is continuous with epistemology in philosophy. Subtracting from that which is known what the knower supplies in the process of knowing, what is left as objective reality? For centuries that was philosophy in one aspect thereof. Subtracting from biblical events and personages what an adoring and imaginative enthusiasm supplied thereto as they framed their narratives, what residuum of fact remains? That is the *crux* of historical criticism. Psychologically unavoidably, narrators put their stamp upon the tradition, and the task of discriminating the stamp from the thing stamped can never be accomplished with indubitable accuracy. This is especially true in the case of Jesus. Just as we know nothing

certainly of Socrates, save that *his* was a demonic personality of tremendous and far-reaching influence, and, for the rest, must speak of Plato's Socrates and Xenophon's Socrates, since we do not have *Socrates'* Socrates, so do we know nothing of *Jesus'* Jesus, but only of John's and the Synoptists' Jesus. The problem of the Jesus-in-himself, like that of the thing-in-itself seems to be insoluble, and we are wiser today in turning from essence to function. What is the function of Jesus as storied to us, of the whole Bible, indeed, in modern experience? But one thing has been accomplished by criticism. It has shaken off the fetters which the sacred book has fastened upon the human spirit. Criticism and authority are exclusive. Since the Bible has lost its authoritative force, we may now more hopefully take up the burning question as to its function.

3. But at this point is the modern world quite sound and healthy? What is the sign of mental health? That a clear thought

be combined with our words, a definite thought concerning whose content and scope we are quite clear. Now, is this the characteristic of our talk about the Bible?

a) "I am a Bible-believer, my faith is the faith of the Bible." This is a common boast. But precisely what does it mean? Is there a single, sharply defined, unitary faith in the Bible which you can appropriate? On the contrary, there are almost as many types of faith as books; and these types are diverse, not simply as to external and incidental matters but as to basic questions of the religious life. You may find there the gross God-idea of fetishism and nature-worship; but also a thought of God so spiritual and supramundane that all definiteness of the name of God threatens to dissipate into the universal and the unpersonal. You may find there the God of wrath and revenge; but also of love and compassion. Again, there is in the Bible a morality of legalism and statutory piety, but there is also the

morality of inner disposition and clean heart. These same people assert that the Christ-picture of the Bible is the center of their faith. Which Christ? The Christ who said that no jot or tittle of the law of the synagogue should pass away till all be fulfilled, according to which we would be in duty bound to keep all that the scribes and Pharisees said; or that other Christ who said that he was lord of the Sabbath and called the whole law entity an old wine skin in which no new wine ought to be put? The Christ that John and Paul called spirit and truth and the law's end; or the Christ of the Apocalypse by whom the law-free Pauline Christians were called liars and deceivers? Thus is it clear that there is no one Bible faith. He who calls himself a Bible-believer has not weighed his words. He is naïve. He must choose from among the Bible faiths the faith he wants, and which he chooses depends upon when and where he lives and what sort of man he is. Speaking strictly, then, there is

not a single Bible-believer today. Not among theologians, because they know the content of the Bible, and thus know how often the faith of the Bible changes, how often new and old fight each other; not among laymen, because they do not know the Bible, but have been told by their religious guides that it is necessary for them to *believe* that they believe in the Bible.

b) But if the Bible-believer is naïve your free biblical critic is in danger of being sophistical. It is easy to say that you are free in your attitude to the Bible, that you stand for the Protestant right of free inquiry, that you apply modern science to biblical data; but it is not so easy to avoid treating Bible words in a different way from other human words, to keep from giving the backward look to liberally minded churches. It is not so easy to keep from reading our modern ideals and beliefs into the Bible, to keep from treating one's own thoughts as if they

were the content of biblical books. How easy it is to ejaculate the biblical phrase, "Son of God," in a way that others shall assume that you mean the ecclesiastical "God the Son!" How easy it is to speak of the unhistorical apocalyptic eschatalogical "Kingdom of God" of the Bible to be miraculously realized, in a way that others shall think you mean the slow growth of ethical society throughout history! How easy it is to know of the great gulf which exists between the different books of the Bible and yet keep up the illusion that the gulf does not exist. Thus, it is not the naïve, untaught Christian, it is the critical biblical scholar today that has the greater temptation to insincerity and cant.

What a host of experts must the church employ today to tell us what the Bible means! What did men think, feel, fear, aspire to, 1800, 2,000, 3,000 years ago? This must be made intelligible to us. It must all be made as plain and fresh to us as if it happened yesterday. Why? Because

God lived and spoke and worked then. And if we will but think as those old people thought, feel as they felt, fear and aspire as they did, we shall have their God, too.

But what do *we* in *our* world think and feel and do? And does God *still* live and speak and work? Can we interpret *their* God, but not *our own?* Can we say everything of their faith but nothing of our own? Men once spoke, moved by the Holy Spirit. Is that spirit still and silent today? If God is God of the past only, then is he a past God. But if he be the living God, he is stirring in our time as in all time. Here is God's world—nature. The sun of Homer, no longer driven across the sky by a charioteer indeed, still shines upon us and is the flaming heart of our world. A particular Jehovah no longer speaks from the mountain of storm, but the peak is still surrounded by a cloud or two of moisture and of mystery. There are no longer two tables of stone, but that law is still a link in the chain of the eternal law that pervades

the world. Land and sea, heaven and earth, lie before us like an open book—God's book, and we are beginning to spell out its meaning a little, a sublime book ever being written. And it is a book which no human copyist has mutilated or corrupted, and from which no line has been lost.

Then there is our own human life. Does not our own experience supply juices and forces that may nourish our religious life? Does not God speak an unmistakable language therein? It is plain unbelief in the living God, plain dishonor to the life of his modern children, to pry into the dead experiences of a plumbless past for the traces of the eternal, and at the same time turn a deaf ear to the voices and visions of your own soul and to the mighty movements of modern society. It is not that God was not there—he was—it is that he is also here. To be sure, distance lends enchantment to the view. To be sure, our life just now is sordid and selfish, hard and

cruel. But God speaks out of all the discordant tones his distinct spiritual language. Whenever did he so urge us to look for the deep-lying causes back and behind all the misery and hopelessness of our modern situation, and so show us that we are collectively participant in, collectively guilty of, what we so bitterly and bravely condemn? God speaks a purely prophetic language, stirring us to help every good thing that is trying to get itself done today, filling us once more with hope that wrongs may be made right. Whenever was society so increasingly aware of the identity of all human interests—that "no life can be pure in its purpose and strong in its strife and all life not be purer and stronger thereby"? So God is preparing a new springtime of the spirit for humanity, and the dead forms of the past are being burst asunder by the budding of a new day. The present asserts its right against the past. The prophet who hears and speaks God's own word, impelled still by the divine Spirit,

has right of way against the scribe who tortures himself with what he has received at second and third hand, which he laboriously and punctiliously explains. Should we not hold our time and energy more sacredly as our debt to the future than to allow ourselves to exhaust them upon what others have said and done, especially if their words and deeds do not accredit themselves to our own heart and life as living and life-giving? No matter from what hoary and sacred past it may come, what we do not feel in our deepest soul as God's eternal life is sounding brass and clanging cymbal.

4. But upon the basis of this *faith in the present*, we may win a better understanding of *every faith of the past*, especially of the faith of which the Bible is the document. In his interesting *Letters*, Schleiermacher, Germany's greatest theologian, makes a significant remark:

> Not everyone [he says] has religion who believes in a sacred book. He alone has religion who has

religion livingly, immediately, and therefore could most easily dispense with the Bible.

And he is right. We have so often put the cart before the horse. We want to understand life on the basis of the book, instead of understanding the book on the basis of life, *our* life. It is with religion much as it is with art—both having this in common, that they are revelations of what is born out of the deep of the human soul; both are revelations of man first and of God secondly. Now, it is one thing to read and write and speak about art, it is another thing to *experience* art, to feel and create art. The shepherd boy playing his flute in his own untaught way on lonely Alpine summits, the day-laborer discerning traces of beauty in the work of his hands—these have more living art in the bottom of their souls than some art scholar who can simply write thick tomes upon the history of art and the philosophy of art. But such men, shepherd and artisan though they be, with their living artistic

hearts, would, if they could, eagerly seek the steeps that lead up to Parnassus and the Home of the Muses—hie to the places where kindred spirits speak their own artistic language, only in a diviner way, that their souls might be enraptured and enriched with new expressions of artistic life. So, similarly, more genuine religion can dwell in the naïve man whose heart is warm with the sunshine of God than in the soul of the scholar who can simply write big books on every verse in the Bible. But this naïve and childlike soul will gladly turn to the great heroes of faith in all the past, and, beneath whatever strange garb, feel the beating of a heart akin to his own, will hearken breathlessly to the sweet sad music of humanity that fate beats from the souls of them that have also believed and suffered and fought and sung and prophesied. And where could such a child of the spirit find so tender human pathos as in patriarchal stories? or such delineation of the dark problem of evil as in the

Book of Job? or such a frank and fearless facing of human doubt, with scarcely a sunny side, as in the Book of Ecclesiastes? or such ethical grandeur in conflict with cult as in Amos or Isaiah or Micah? or such hunger and thirst for the Eternal as in many of the Psalms? or such a flawless hymn to love as Paul's seraphic song? or such simple and obvious and human lessons of freedom and truth and purity and mercy as in beatitude and parable? Out of our Bibles we may all make a Bible which will ever give us the day's bread for the day's need. But it is not in the Bible only that such fellowship is to be found. Judea is not the only land of faith, any more than Greece is the only land of art. Other sheep, both in art and faith, has the Great Shepherd which are not of these folds. How glad we should be of this! With what shame and repentance should we recall the harsh judgments of our churches upon the forms of belief and of conduct of God's other children! It looks

now as if once again in religion, not the wise and the understanding, but a little child shall lead us. We shall again hearken to the weird music which the divine fingers have smitten from the heart-strings of strange and alien folk.

Even so, many sacred books of the past as there are, our main concern in life is not with those. There is another book—a greater and richer—not the Bible of the Christian or of the Muslim or of the Chinaman or of the Hindu, but of Humanity. A vast book, this, in which our own sacred Scriptures, composed themselves of so many books, are but a single book, nay, but a single line! Our sense of sacredness which has consecrated the books that were bruised out of the bleeding heart of ancient Israel must be widened so as to include this vaster book of humanity. In this Bible of humanity we too ought to write. Some line, some poor letter, it may be, must we write—write with our life's blood. That line will be the worth of our life to the

world. Then we too shall have labored on the world's Bible—the great eternal book of life for the living. We shall then be living espistles known and read of all men.

We are at the end of a long way. As I look back, I am filled with regret that so many things have been left undone, so many meagerly done, everything imperfectly done. But here and there you may have found a grain of truth, perhaps a crumb of comfort. I trust you may also have found some spur to think better than I have thought and to do better than I have done, that our common work may bring in a better future.

But stay a moment. One hundred years ago today Abraham Lincoln was born. As a private soldier in the everlasting struggle for freedom through that truth which alone makes free, I may be permitted to close with his words upon my lips:

With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on.

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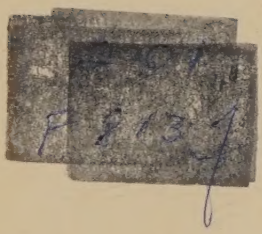

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